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New York

President:	Mr. Moraes Cabral	(Portugal)
Members:	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Ms. Čolaković
	Brazil	Mrs. Viotti
	China	Mr. Li Baodong
	Colombia	Mr. Osorio
	France	Mr. Araud
	Gabon	Mr. Moungara Moussotsi
	Germany	Mr. Wittig
	India	Mr. Hardeep Singh Puri
	Lebanon	Mr. Salam
	Nigeria	Mr. Onemola
	Russian Federation	Mr. Churkin
	South Africa	Mr. Mashabane
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Tatham
	United States of America	Mrs. DiCarlo

Agenda

Security Council resolutions 1160 (1998), 1199 (1998), 1203 (1998), 1239 (1999) and 1244 (1999)

Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (S/2011/675)

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Please recycle

The meeting was called to order at 11.10 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Security Council resolutions 1160 (1998), 1199 (1998), 1203 (1998), 1239 (1999) and 1244 (1999)

Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (S/2011/675)

The President: Under rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representative of Serbia to participate in this meeting. On behalf of the Council, I welcome His Excellency Mr. Vuk Jeremić, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Serbia.

Under rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite Mr. Farid Zarif, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo, to participate in this meeting.

Under rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite Mr. Enver Hoxhaj to participate in this meeting.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2011/675, the report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo.

I shall now give the floor to Mr. Farid Zarif.

Mr. Zarif: The report before the Council (S/2011/675) details the activities of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) from 16 July to 15 October 2011. Since my last briefing to the Council, on 30 August (see S/PV.6604), the Council has met twice, on 15 September (S/PV.6616 and S/PV.6617) and 28 September, and has been briefed on the situation in the north of Kosovo, which remains precarious and warrants the attention and leadership of the Council.

Since mid-October, the Kosovo Force (KFOR) has consolidated perimeters at Gates 1 and 31 and has attempted to remove some of the Kosovo Serb roadblocks. Those attempts have resulted in occasional clashes with the Serb protesters. The gates have remained closed to traffic owing to the barricades erected by Kosovo Serb residents in the north, who have continued to object to the presence, albeit symbolic at the moment, of customs and police officials from the Pristina institutions. The European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo (EULEX) continues to transport Pristina officials to the gates by helicopter. In response, the northern Kosovo Serbs refuse EULEX the freedom of movement throughout the north. Meanwhile, KFOR's ability to conduct patrols and access its bases in the north is unpredictable, as convoys are sporadically blocked at the barricades when accompanied by EULEX or when carrying heavy engineering equipment.

On the night of 23 to 24 November, KFOR attempted to dismantle an unmanned barricade at Dudin krš, close to the northern Mitrovica bypass. That attempt sparked a violent clash with local Serb residents, who attacked KFOR soldiers with rocks and vehicles. According to KFOR, 21 of its soldiers, personnel from Germany, Hungary and Portugal, were injured in the incident.

In the morning of 28 November, KFOR soldiers took over and removed the Kosovo Serb roadblock at a village west of Zubin Potok. KFOR said that, during the operation, it used water cannons, tear gas, pepper spray and rubber bullets. KFOR also reported that two of its soldiers were wounded by small arms fire. The situation calmed down for a few hours, but the violence resumed late in the afternoon, with Kosovo Serb demonstrators throwing Molotov cocktails at KFOR troops, injuring an additional 23 soldiers. Some 15 Serb demonstrators reportedly received treatment for the injuries they sustained during the clashes. The situation today has been peaceful, although local Kosovo Serb protesters are still present at the site.

Those incidents marked a clear escalation in the level of tension and violence in the north. UNMIK has expressed serious concern at those acts of violence and has condemned the shootings targeting KFOR soldiers. President Jahjaga issued a statement condemning the attacks on KFOR, while President Tadić of Serbia this morning called on KFOR to avoid the use of force and asked the Kosovo Serbs to remove the barricades.

Regrettably, the situation in the north has become intertwined with the politics of the Serbian elections to

be held next spring and with the current political dynamics in Pristina.

UNMIK and its international partners have taken several initiatives to contain the current situation and to help to bring into focus its underlying causes, which deserve the attention and careful examination of this Council. We are working hard to help to dispel tensions and create an atmosphere in which durable solutions will be possible. Accordingly, we have actively sought out interlocutors from across the political spectrum — in Pristina, northern Kosovo and Belgrade — to promote efforts to find common ground and engage in constructive dialogue. We have urged all sides to explore ways and opportunities to communicate more effectively with one another. Our core messages have been to show patience, refrain from the use of force, avoid violence and support the Security Council-mandated international presences in the fulfilment of their responsibilities by not impeding their freedom of movement in the north.

One element of our strategy of engagement has already borne some fruit. The various sides have toned down their rhetoric, through which they tended to speak to their respective constituencies with inadequate regard for the misunderstandings that their remarks could create. I am pleased to report to the Council that that advice has been heeded and is being positively implemented in Pristina and Belgrade.

It should be noted that, without progress at the political level, EULEX and KFOR will continue to face difficulties in fulfilling their mandates north of the Ibar River, and that previous relative successes in building a functional and multi-ethnic Kosovo police presence there will be jeopardized. Recent attacks targeting Kosovo police officers in Zubin Potok, notably the attack on the residence of the Chief of the Investigation Unit and a hand grenade attack directed at the police station, which appear to be related to the local political situation, seem to reflect the currently tense situation in the north and may cause further impediments to effective policing.

Despite KFOR's general posture to avoid forceful action in the north, the situation continues to be extremely volatile, and the combined factors of frustration, fear and mistrust could easily and quickly provide the spark that could ignite violence, as was demonstrated by the recent clashes. At the same time, other incidents, such as the killing of a Kosovo Serb and the wounding of three others in the Kroi i Vitakut/Brdjani neighbourhood in northern Mitrovica on 9 November only serve to exacerbate the ethnic tensions. Consequently, the situation calls for strong, united leadership from the international community.

In light of all this, the resumption of the European Union (EU)-facilitated dialogue between Pristina and Belgrade on 21 November, after a hiatus that followed Pristina's attempt to take control of the gates on 25 July, should be welcomed by all. The dialogue provides an appropriate forum for the discussion of a way forward that would represent a European solution for the two crossing points. We should encourage the sides to maintain their engagement in good faith, and to work closely with the EU facilitator, whose leadership is key to the process, to reach agreement on such a solution.

At the same dialogue meeting, and following on an earlier agreement in July, it was agreed that the European University Association will be asked to certify diplomas issued by universities of each party for use by the other in connection with further education and/or public employment. Regional cooperation was also discussed, with the parties agreeing that they would return to the issue at their next meeting, scheduled for tomorrow, with a view to reaching a final agreement. The parties also reviewed the process of implementation of previously reached agreements on cadastre, civil registry and freedom of movement, and committed themselves to making rapid progress in this process. It is important to ensure that the momentum of this dialogue, in terms of both reaching agreements and of their implementation, be maintained.

This period has seen an increase of incidents affecting minority communities elsewhere in Kosovo, including the killing of a Kosovo Croat and the wounding of another in southern Kosovo on 2 October, and the killing of a Kosovo Serb and injuring of two others in western Kosovo on 20 October. While it is unclear whether these cases were ethnically motivated, it is a fact that criminal incidents affecting members of minority communities weaken these communities' perception of their safety and security. It is important to note that the number of criminal incidents affecting minorities has also increased compared to the same period one year ago, which, considering the present situation, has a greater negative impact upon these communities' perception of their safety and security.

UNMIK is carefully and closely following the trend of such incidents and is engaging both with local police and community leaders, as well as with EULEX, to intensify efforts to resolve all inter-ethnic criminal cases, which are particularly damaging to the prospects for peace and reconciliation. More importantly, UNMIK is adding its voice to that of others in the international community calling for more active and effective efforts on the part of political leaders to make use of their leadership positions in order to help change the atmosphere in which inter-ethnic crime is tacitly tolerated.

Perceptions of safety and security are one of the key elements affecting minority returns. We continue to observe with concern the recent decline in the rate of such returns to Kosovo. While vocal opposition to returns has diminished, in early November a public protest by some 200 members of the receiving Kosovo-Albanian community in a formerly mixed village in Ferizaj/Uroševac municipality prevented a visit by Serb internally displaced persons, who were escorted away by the Kosovo police after one of their minivans was stoned outside the meeting venue. We are concerned by the incident, but note that the municipal leadership has publicly denounced the receiving community's opposition, and has taken action to reschedule the visit to the community.

There is better news regarding the preservation of Serbian Orthodox heritage sites. I am pleased to report that since spring 2009, when the Kosovo Police gradually started to assume responsibility for security arrangements at protected sites, there has been a decrease of incidents at these sites. Currently, ethnically mixed teams of Kosovo Police are in charge of security arrangements at 21 sites, mostly churches and monasteries. Although the Serbian Orthodox Church assesses the situation around the church sites to be fragile and has undertaken some physical protection measures of its own, the best guarantee for the long-term security of these sites is the development of positive relations between the Church and local representatives of the Kosovo-Albanian community, in which some senior clerics are actively engaged. The continued support of the Kosovo authorities for the established mechanisms for the special protection and reconstruction of Orthodox sites, including the Reconstruction and Implementation Commission, would contribute to this process.

There has been only modest progress in the clarification of the fates and location of missing persons. In this regard, I wish to reiterate the call on all those who have information on the fates and locations of the missing to come forward and pass that information on to the International Committee of the Red Cross.

Finally, I wish briefly to update the Council on the steps taken by EULEX to investigate the allegations contained in the Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly's resolution 1782 (2011), "Investigation of allegations of inhuman treatment of people and illicit trafficking in human organs in Kosovo". A Special Investigative Task Force has been set up and has taken over the preliminary investigation launched by EULEX into the allegations. The lead prosecutor announced that he had secured Albania's commitment to cooperating in the investigation, and declared his commitment to following the trail of evidence wherever it may lead. He recently met with the Presidents of Kosovo, Albania and Serbia, as well as with war crimes prosecutors in the three capitals. As noted in the Secretary-General's report,

> "Belgrade remains of the view that an independent body, with investigative powers in Albania and beyond, should be established by the Security Council to lead the investigation." (*S/2011/675, para. 29*)

In closing, I would like to thank the members of the Council for their support for UNMIK, and in particular for continuing efforts to contribute to solutions that not only accord with the values and purposes of the United Nations, but contribute towards the fulfilment of the aspirations of the people of the region to a more peaceful and more prosperous future as part of Europe. We count upon the Council's continued support for our efforts to tackle the immediate and delicate problems described in the present report of the Secretary-General. Moreover, we hope that the Council will assist us by putting the full weight of its authority behind the messages we are sending to the parties, in particular concerning their respective leaderships.

While some speak of Kosovo as a frozen conflict, I believe that the situation is fluid and dynamic. This potentially entails greater dangers, but there also exist genuine opportunities to pursue a viable, sustainable resolution that could overcome the long-standing

tensions. It is my belief that this can best be achieved through the stewardship of this Council. Above all, I believe that what is needed at the moment is for sides to master the goodwill, pragmatism, boldness, courage and resolve necessary to achieve genuine progress. No less than the taking of full statesman-like responsibility is demanded, if the present opportunities for moving forward towards peaceful, durable solutions are not to be missed.

The President: I thank Mr. Zarif for his briefing.

I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Vuk Jeremić, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Serbia.

Mr. Jeremić (Serbia): Thank you, Mr. President, for convening this meeting of the Security Council pursuant to resolution 1244 (1999).

I welcome the presence of Special Representative Farid Zarif. I congratulate him on his recent appointment and thank him for his remarks. The United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo remains a crucial pillar of peace and stability in the province.

At the beginning of my statement, I would like to once again express our deep gratitude to the substantial majority of the world's nations that respect Serbia's sovereignty and territorial integrity. By continuing to support the principle of the inviolability of borders of United Nations States Members, they are preventing a dangerous precedent that could be repeated in any part of the world, with devastating consequences for international peace and stability.

The security situation in our southern province of Kosovo has been greatly aggravated since the end of the previous reporting period. Serbia's repeated warnings that unilateral forceful action would adversely affect stability kept being ignored by some key actors. Despite considerable diplomatic efforts, it has not been possible to reach consensus in the Chamber that unilateralism and the use of force are unacceptable. As a result, today everything is much more difficult, as positions harden in the light of deteriorating conditions on the ground. It is truly frustrating that all of this was eminently avoidable, had everyone had enough patience to seek solutions by exclusively peaceful means and through dialogue.

At the beginning of the three-month period covered by the report of the Secretary-General (S/2011/675), it was possible to be cautiously optimistic, as certain aspects of the situation in Kosovo seemed to be improving. The fifth round of dialogue between Belgrade and Pristina had just taken place, on 2 July, and had produced status-neutral agreements in some important areas. Rather than trying to build on the positive momentum, however, a choice was made in Pristina to attempt to unilaterally alter the reality on the ground, clearly outside of the framework provided by the dialogue.

That happened twice during the reporting period. The first time was on 25 July, when the territory's ethnic-Albanian authorities ordered the deployment to North Kosovo of the so-called paramilitary Regional Operational Support Unit (ROSU), with the aim of seizing the administrative checkpoints known as Gates 1 and 31. According to the report, this was "not coordinated with the international presences or the communities on the ground" (*S/2011/675, para. 3*). As a consequence, dynamics changed overnight — "a significant deterioration in the security situation" (*ibid., para. 10*) in North Kosovo. The report also states that "In reaction to the actions of Pristina, local Kosovo Serbs, who continue to reject the authority of the Kosovo institutions, erected roadblocks" (*ibid., para. 4*). Thanks in part to the swift, yet measured, response by Belgrade, the situation was contained and did not spin dangerously out of control. The overall state of affairs in North Kosovo had ceased to worsen by the end of August, although tensions remained high.

It is against that backdrop that the sixth round of dialogue took place in Brussels, on 2 September. Another status-neutral solution was reached, that time on customs stamps. We were led to believe that, in the period ahead, implementation would be discussed in good faith so that underlying procedures could be agreed and put into practice. Instead, for the second time in as many months, an attempt was made to impose an outcome that was clearly outside of the dialogue framework on the very same issue, namely, Gates 1 and 31.

On 7 September, Hashim Thaçi, the so-called Prime Minister of Kosovo, explicitly stated his purpose, that is, to "preserve and assume control over the territorial integrity of the Republic of Kosovo". He also said that "Kosovo customs officials, appointed by the Kosovo Customs, will be present; Kosovo border police, appointed by the Kosovo Police, will be present". A document entitled "Kosovo Police Operational Plan" confirmed that intention. It reads:

"All operations will be conducted under Kosovo sovereignty and in accordance with Kosovo laws and regulations".

That is manifestly incompatible with resolution 1244 (1999), and drastically deviates from the status-neutral framework of the United Nations. It also ignores the terms of the Secretary-General's six-point agreement, which was welcomed by the Council in November 2008 and which states very precisely that "international customs officers appointed in accordance with Security Council resolution 1244 (1999) will be reinstated at gates 1 and 31".

Nevertheless, both the Kosovo Force (KFOR) and the European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo (EULEX) chose to support the operation, which began on 16 September. Explicit warnings were voiced in the Chamber on the eve of the announced action that this would effectively mean stepping beyond the limits of KFOR's and EULEX's respective mandates, in violation of resolution 1244 (1999). Not only would that undermine the centrality of the dialogue process, but it was also blatantly obvious that it would heighten tensions in North Kosovo, and would surely result in the loss of the international missions' legitimacy in the eyes of the local population.

Unfortunately, the inevitable happened. Residents of North Kosovo responded by reinforcing existing roadblocks and erecting new ones. Their resolute determination to resist the imposition of a decisively unwanted regime has become one of the most conspicuous elements of the reality on the ground. Regretfully, some of the occasional clashes turned violent and resulted in injuries on both sides of the divide. Serbia's strong condemnation of the use of force by any party has always been swift and unequivocal.

At this particularly delicate moment, it is critical that we send the right messages and draw the appropriate lessons from the recent incident at Dudin krš, near Zveçan, and yesterday's at Jagnjenica. Both began in similar fashion. Unprovoked, KFOR troops rapidly approached the barricades and immediately started to dismantle them with heavy equipment. That caused the situation to escalate. Villagers from neighbouring areas began to arrive to defend their positions. In both cases, scores of civilians and dozens of soldiers were injured.

We call upon all stakeholders on the ground in North Kosovo — KFOR and EULEX officials, as well as local community leaders — to engage in dialogue and work together to restore calm immediately. The removal of barricades is clearly in the interest of peace and stability, but it should be achieved exclusively through peaceful means. We must find the way out of the vicious circle of violence, in which only extremism thrives. It is indicative, however, that almost every time a new round of dialogue between Belgrade and Pristina is due to take place — in the present case, tomorrow — unilateralism suddenly comes back to the fore.

Negotiations conducted in good faith are predicated on abstaining from the use of instruments of compulsion. Those are mutually exclusive concepts. Either one negotiates in good faith or tries to resolve the issue through forceful imposition. The choice could not be clearer: peaceful dialogue or unilateral action. Serbia is ready for the former, and categorically rejects the latter. We therefore echo the report's conclusion that "sensitive issues relating to northern Kosovo can be resolved only through peaceful means, taking into account the views of the communities on the ground" (*ibid., para. 56*).

While we have rightfully focused our attention on events taking place in the North, we must not ignore the fact that the situation in the South has gotten worse, as well. The report underlines that, in comparison to the same period last year, "the number of violent incidents affecting the Serb population [south of the Ibër/Ibar] increased following the July events" (*ibid., para. 20*). In addition to the brutal murder of a Kosovo Serb returnee, the report also lists numerous acts of desecration and vandalism against Serbian Orthodox Church holy sites and cemeteries, vehicle stonings, arson attacks, burglaries, theft of farm equipment and drinking well contaminations. The report does not indicate that any of those hate crimes have been solved, or even that anyone has been charged with committing them.

Unfortunately, the report omits a number of other incidents that further darken the overall picture of the situation on the ground in the province. I will limit myself to mentioning just one of them, but it is typical. On 28 July, on the outskirts of the village of Doganović, on the Vitina-Štrpce road, two ethnic Serbs from Klokot were stopped by a ROSU contingent. They were on their way to sell vegetables at the Štrpce

farmers market. They were forced out of their vehicle and their Serbian papers — acceptable under the terms of the dialogue — were torn up. Their license plates — also acceptable under the terms of the dialogue — were taken away from them. The ROSU officers then proceeded to beat them mercilessly. Many similar incidents have been taking place, but I believe this one is illustrative enough.

Under such shocking circumstances, it is no wonder that, for Kosovo Serb internally displaced persons, the "pace of the returns remains markedly slow" (*ibid., para. 32*). In that quarter, only 96 ethnic Serbs went back to the province, less than half of the number who returned in the same period last year. The future looks even bleaker. According to a document of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees entitled "UNHCR Global Appeal 2012-2013 — Serbia (and Kosovo: SC Res, 1244)", "the potential for returns is almost exhausted".

Almost a year ago, the Council of Europe released a deeply disturbing report entitled "Inhuman treatment of people and illicit trafficking in human organs in Kosovo". Since that time, excruciatingly little has been done to uncover the truth about those allegations, especially considering the uniquely heinous nature of the charges. In that regard, the recent appointment of Clint Williamson as lead prosecutor for the EULEX Special Investigative Task Force is a welcome development. We will assist him and his team in any way that we can, for we believe they can make an invaluable contribution to uncovering what occurred inside Kosovo itself.

That, however, remains manifestly insufficient, for the alleged harvesting and smuggling of organs of innocent Serbian civilians took place beyond that territory. Despite all protestations to the contrary, it is indisputable that EULEX cannot operate at full capacity anywhere outside Kosovo. In other words, the European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo has neither an adequate mandate nor sufficient temporal and territorial jurisdiction to carry out an investigation that would be comprehensive in scope. The EULEX Special Investigative Task Force has no ability to enforce the cooperation of all concerned. Only this body can do that.

We are not opposed to the centrality of EULEX in an investigation mechanism. But it must be both empowered by, and accountable to, the Security Council. That has been the standard applied in each previous instance involving serious war crimes and crimes against humanity in the Balkans, whichever side the perpetrators belonged to and irrespective of their political roles. There is no compelling reason not to make a comprehensive, independent investigation accountable to the whole world in this case as well.

That is the only way to guarantee fairness and transparency and to prevent doubts about anyone's full commitment. A few days ago, however, the Task Force spokesman said that details of the investigation it is conducting would remain confidential until it has come to an end. That might take years, he added. That is outrageous and unacceptable. If senior officials of the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia brief the Security Council every six months, why should those tasked with the organs trafficking case not do so as well? We have already presented some proposals on the investigation mechanism, and we urge the Council to act upon them.

Come what may, the truth cannot possibly rise to the surface without ironclad witness protection guarantees. At this point, they simply do not exist. The recent mysterious death of a key witness in an important war crimes trial has reinforced the perception that EULEX is unable to guarantee the safety of those in its protective custody. The defendant in the case in question is Fatmir Limaj, a powerful former minister in Hashim Thaçi's Cabinet. He has been identified by the Council of Europe, together with several others, including Thaçi himself, as having played vital roles as co-conspirators in various categories of criminal activity.

The witness, Mr. Agim Zogaj, had been under the protection of EULEX, but somehow ended up alone and dead in a park in Duisburg, Germany. Local authorities have stated that they were unaware that he required 24-hour protection. In an authentic diary excerpt published posthumously by the Pristina daily newspaper Koha Ditore, Zogaj addresses Limaj directly, writing that "for years now my children fear you more than they feared Milosevic". In another passage, written just a few days before his death, he suggests that EULEX did not have the capacity to protect him. That raises the question of whether he truly committed suicide, as the local police have preliminarily concluded.

My Government is resolved to undertake all the necessary measures to pave the way for establishing a comprehensive peace between Serbs and Albanians. We will keep working relentlessly in its pursuit, despite all the setbacks caused by unilateralism. Dialogue is the only vehicle to reach that goal. Its intention — as stated in a General Assembly resolution that was adopted by acclamation and initiated the dialogue, is to "improve the lives of the people" (*resolution 64/298, para. 2*). That is its most important, status-neutral objective. The talks are not an exercise in enforcing either party's legal position. They are focused on practical considerations. If both sides are prepared to be flexible, common ground can surely be found.

A great twentieth-century leader famously once called for a fresh start. "Let us begin anew", he said,

> "remembering on both sides that civility is not a sign of weakness, and sincerity is always subject to proof. Let us never negotiate out of fear. But let us never fear to negotiate. Let both sides explore what problems unite us instead of belabouring those problems which divide us".

We too must reinvigorate our efforts. It is essential that all stakeholders pledge to make the dialogue the sole mechanism within which differences will be brought to the fore.

We are facing a worsening situation in Kosovo. It necessitates more active engagement by this body. I call on the Security Council to make sure that no more forceful unilateral acts are allowed to take place, and that it does so in clear, unequivocal, unbiased and status-neutral terms. I urge this body to take that crucial step without any further hesitation.

If we are genuinely concerned about peace and stability in Kosovo — if re-establishing security and improving the quality of life for the people on the ground is our objective — then there can be no justification for refusing to heed such a call right now. A failure to act would be a disappointing abdication of the responsibility entrusted to this Council by the world's family of nations. Taking charge of the present moment, on the other hand, cannot but enhance the enduring benefit and honour of the founding principles of the United Nations.

The President: I now give the floor to Mr. Enver Hoxhaj.

Mr. Hoxhaj: It is a great honour for me to address the Security Council again regarding the recent developments in Kosovo. I also express the gratitude of the people of the Republic of Kosovo for the Council's support for our young but functional and multi-ethnic democracy.

Before us is the most recent report of the Secretary-General on Kosovo (S/2011/675). The situation outlined in that report helps to remind us that Kosovo is an important State in the Balkans. In its fourth year as an independent nation, Kosovo has proven to be a factor of peace and stability and security in the region and throughout Europe.

Allow me to speak about four key developments in Kosovo.

The first deals with the further consolidation of Kosovo's statehood. In the last three months, we made crucial progress in strengthening our institutions. Kosovo has maintained institutional stability, and there are visible improvements in all aspects of life, including democratic governance, the rule of law and a market-based economy. It has proved to be a cohesive State. A report published recently by the United Nations Development Programme states that there has been a general increase in people's satisfaction with the work of the key executive, legislative and judicial institutions.

The democratization process is going in the right direction. There is an open and democratic dialogue that includes all stakeholders in our society and that covers a wide range of different policies and issues. That is illustrated by the work of the commission for constitutional changes and the commission for a new election law. Cooperation between all political parties and other, non-political actors is excellent. The Kosovo Assembly has passed 33 laws on issues such as municipal cooperation, missing persons, education, cadastral regulations and international legal cooperation in criminal matters.

We are committed to strengthening the rule of law. The Kosovo justice system is engaged in fighting organized crime and corruption. There have been concrete results on cases involving war crimes, organized crime and corruption. Kosovo has had excellent preparation with the European Union Rule of Law Mission (EULEX) and the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia on all those cases. Once again, we consider the rule of law fundamental

for Kosovo's development and the development of the Western Balkans.

Like other countries in the region, we have had many challenges this year. Despite the fact that our people are optimistic about the prospects for economic development, unemployment remains one of the key problems that we face today. For that reason, we are working very hard to ensure economic growth and social welfare.

Kosovo has maintained macroeconomic stability and continuous economic growth. While Europe is facing a debt crisis, Kosovo remains the least indebted country in the Balkans. The new budget law was presented to Parliament earlier this month. It foresees a 6 per cent increase in gross domestic production for the next year. We aim to accomplish this through investments, exports and consumption, which in turn will provide jobs and help ease unemployment. We consider economic growth a crucial element of our social cohesion and our efforts at ethnic integration.

In this reporting period we made significant progress in our efforts to participate in regional and international initiatives. We have been and we remain a responsible member of the international community. The size and geographic scope of Kosovo's recognition is global, which demonstrates that Kosovo's independence is a geopolitical reality. In that connection I would like to thank the Governments of Gabon, Kuwait and the Ivory Coast for their decisions to recognize independent Kosovo. We strongly believe that many other countries will follow suit in the near future. Following the firm verdict of the International Court of Justice, which confirmed that the declaration of Kosovo's independence did not violate international law and resolution 1244 (1999), there are no legal reasons to further delay the recognition of Kosovo's independence.

The second point I wish to make has to do with the process of European integration. We see Kosovo, like other countries in the Balkans, as a critical part of Europe in terms of history, geography and culture. However, political integration, in terms of the European integration process, is the best framework for ensuring long-term peace, stability and prosperity in our region. At the same time, it is also the best way for the region to overcome divisions, through a process of reform and mutual support.

I would like to inform the Council that on 12 October we received the European Commission's progress report on Kosovo, which correctly reflects the situation on the ground, stating that "Kosovo has made progress as regards the political criteria in a number of important areas". The work of the central and local governments and relevant departments is praised. Progress was also mentioned in our decentralization efforts in building multi-ethnic institutions and a diverse society.

Like our neighbours, we aspire to secure visa liberalization for all citizens and contractual relations with the European Union. Due to our progress, the report delivered the long-awaited news about launching a dialogue on the visa liberalization process towards the end of this year. That is a remarkable achievement for Kosovo. Now we also hope that the European Council will support us by concluding a contractual relationship in the form of a trade agreement or even a stabilization and association agreement.

I believe that Kosovo should not be a forgotten and isolated country. In 2011, Kosovo made important steps towards European integration. We hope that 2012 will be the year of a European Kosovo.

The third important point for the Government of Kosovo and for the future of the region is the situation in the north of the country. In our previous meetings in this Chamber, I presented my Government's views with respect to the situation in the north of Kosovo. Again, I consider it very important to inform the Council about the latest developments.

The state of affairs in the north of Kosovo is complex. It threatens the functionality of Kosovo as a multi-ethnic State and is a serious threat to regional peace and security. The status quo has been tolerated since 1999, in violation of resolution 1244 (1999). Under these circumstances, the Government of Serbia has maintained control and has sponsored a complete, illegal system of its structures. Security and police units, as well as paramilitary and defence structures, are still present and operating in that part of Kosovo. This is taking place in direct violation of resolution 1244 (1999) and of the Kumanovo Agreement, which explicitly prohibits Serbia from maintaining a security and armed forces presence.

The operation of illegal Serbian structures has posed a significant obstacle to the integration of the local population and to the implementation of the rule

of law. This is the only corner of Europe that has not had free and democratic elections or participation in democratic institutions in the last twelve years. It is also the only case in Europe in which one country, through its security forces, is controlling part of another country. In that area, where law and order are absent, criminal activities and organized crime have flourished. As we have seen, besides the economic implications for Kosovo, Serbia and the rest of the Balkans, such a black-hole situation has seriously threatened regional security.

The illegal security structures of organized crime aim to create a status quo in order to safeguard their illegal economic activities, such as smuggling, trafficking and others. With the support of the Serbian Government, illegal structures have held the local population hostage and threaten peace and order.

It is necessary to mention here that since 1999 we have been a great financial contributor to the local institutions in that part of Kosovo. Just this year, we invested over €5 million in different projects, and we will do more. Unfortunately, Belgrade has at all times interfered and denied every form of cooperation for the good of the local Serb community there.

The Government of Kosovo has shown patience for a year. We have insisted that the situation should be resolved in cooperation with international mechanisms. We have been and remain committed to resolving this situation through cooperation, not confrontation. But our approach — to give peace and understanding a chance — has been misused by the Government of Serbia. Serbia refers to resolution 1244 (1999) over and over again, as it did today. However, Serbia has done everything in its power to prevent the implementation of that resolution in the north of Kosovo and to prevent the development of the multi-ethnic character of our society there.

The same has happened with the Ahtisaari Plan since 2008. Most of the provisions of the Ahtisaari Plan are aimed at ensuring the best mechanisms and rights for the Kosovo Serbs. To date, Kosovo has implemented more than 90 per cent of the Plan, and the integration of the Kosovo Serbs across the country is a reality. The Plan could not be implemented in the north because Serbia never showed any interest in improving the lives of the local Serbs there.

When I mention the north of Kosovo, I am specifically referring to the three and a half municipalities: the northern part of the city of Mitrovica, Leposavić, Zveçan and Zubin Potok. Thirteen thousand people live in this part of Kosovo, but the majority of Kosovo Serbs live across Kosovo, and around 100,000 take part in all levels of Kosovo institutions.

The decision of the Kosovo Government to establish the rule of law and to enforce reciprocity measures in trade relations was not a violent act. It was an attempt to establish the rule of law and order and to implement the agreement on Customs stamps reached in Brussels. The Government of Kosovo has been working in close coordination with international partners to secure basic freedom of movement and the rule of law.

What is currently happening in that part of Kosovo, even as we meet here today? The situation remains unchanged, blocked and threatening. Trucks, rocks and various obstacles are blocking most of the roads in the three municipalities in the north. A total of 18 roadblocks are preventing the free movement of people and goods. Even the troops of the Kosovo Force (KFOR), a force mandated by resolution 1244 (1999), and the European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo (EULEX) are prevented from crossing those barricades. This poses a real threat to security within Kosovo and to regional peace and stability.

At the same time, we are concerned about the war narratives that are still present in the Serbian political discourse. That was confirmed last week by the statements made by members of the Serbian Government, who, when talking about Kosovo, said that Serbia could not and would not watch peacefully if a red line was crossed. They sent threatening messages and promoted the concept of a balance of fear between Kosovo and Serbia.

It is necessary to mention here that since 25 July, the Kosovo institutions have not been the ones to use violence. The opposite is true. The illegal Serbian security structures have systematically used violence against citizens and peacekeeping soldiers. In the last two weeks alone, more than 54 soldiers have been wounded, including in the escalation of violence that occurred yesterday.

We have been patient, hoping that our neighbour, Serbia, would understand that roadblocks and threats are not solutions to our problems. We do not wish to be part of destabilizing scenarios, and we will not tolerate

being threatened by destructive forms of intimidation. We are a constructive partner in resolving the issues we face, but we will not give up our serenity or the functioning of our young, democratic State. We are working to improve our good-neighbourly relations, always oriented towards dialogue and European integration.

This brings me to my last point: the technical dialogue. Our dedication to peace and stability and to a European future for the whole region led us to engage in a dialogue with Serbia that is facilitated by the European Union. This technical dialogue is aimed at finding solutions to the practical issues that our people are faced with every day.

Dialogue is a very important instrument for us to build good-neighbourly relations as two independent States. We are willing to put the past behind us and work together for a better future. It is for that reason that we are participating in this dialogue in a constructive manner and in good faith. We are working towards outcomes that improve the lives of all citizens in Kosovo and Serbia. The resolution of issues concerning the freedom of movement of people and goods will greatly benefit people in both countries.

Our goal is to bring services closer to all citizens of Kosovo, and all of the solutions that we have proposed so far are aimed at bringing communities together, not dividing them. I do not believe that there should be, or could be, ethnic electricity, ethnic mobile telephones or ethnic car plates, as these concepts are against European values and norms. We will therefore accept all solutions that are European solutions. Such solutions should be clear and easy to implement and should not produce more parallelism.

But let me make clear the position of my Government on the dialogue. Kosovo is and will be part of this dialogue. We welcome the fact that Serbia, after some months of boycott, returned to the negotiating table last week. However, we should not understand dialogue as a process that involves simply attending meetings, without any concrete results. We are very much interested in outcomes and in the implementation of agreements.

As I reported here at previous meetings in July and September, Kosovo and Serbia agreed on many important issues. To date, only one agreement has been implemented by Serbia. This undermines the trust between both sides and hinders the prospects for new agreements.

Kosovo supports the integration of the region into the European Union. However, we will never accept countries aspiring to integration, such as Serbia, undermining Kosovo's statehood and controlling part of its territory through illegal security structures. We therefore believe that the time has come for Serbia to remove the roadblocks, dismantle its security structures and accept the European model of integrated border management between the two countries.

We are deeply committed to the implementation of the entire Ahtisaari Plan as the best model for the integration of the Kosovo Serbs. According to the Plan, Kosovo Serbs in these three municipalities can have full self-governance, something that no other community can enjoy today in Europe.

We expect that the next round of dialogue, scheduled for tomorrow, will take place and will bring concrete outcomes in the areas of regional cooperation, integrated border management, telecommunications and energy. But let me repeat: we are very interested in reaching agreement on those issues, and, more importantly, implementing them on the ground. We hope that Serbia is not using the dialogue to score political points in order to get European Union candidate status. We also hope that it will not boycott it again after 9 December, when the European Council will take important decisions for the Balkans.

Let me conclude by saying that the Government of Kosovo is committed to providing all its citizens the peaceful and prosperous future that they deserve. We are determined to integrate the people in this part of Kosovo with the rest of the country and maintain our internationally recognized borders. We will make every effort to communicate with the Kosovo Serbs in the north, and we will spare no resource to enable the creation of free and democratic institutions in the north, so that people can live free of fear and intimidation. The Government of Kosovo will exercise its legitimate right to guarantee law, order and peace in its entire territory. The municipalities in the north are part of Kosovo. They will be so forever. We will never accept a status quo, a frozen situation or ethnic partition, as senior-level officials in Serbia are promoting.

I think that, after 20 years, the time has come for Serbia to define its national interests in terms of

political integration within Europe and economic development, and not in terms of territory. Serbia should come to terms with independent Kosovo. We remain willing to normalize relations with Serbia. The policy goal of my Government is the integration of Kosovo into the Euro-Atlantic institutions.

Finally, the Security Council can count on Kosovo for cooperation in order to maintain international peace and security. As the report of the Secretary-General shows, a threat to Kosovo's peace is indeed a threat to regional security and stability.

The President: I shall now give the floor to members of the Security Council.

Mr. Hardeep Singh Puri (India): At the outset, I would like to thank Special Representative of the Secretary-General Farid Zarif for his briefing and for the Secretary-General's comprehensive report on the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK), covering the period of July to October (S/2011/675). I would also like to thank His Excellency Mr. Vuk Jeremić, Foreign Minister of Serbia, and Mr. Enver Hoxhaj for their statements.

There have been a few positive developments during the reporting period. We note that during the European Union-facilitated dialogue in Brussels on 2 September, Serbia agreed to recognize Kosovo's customs stamps. The two sides also reached agreements on the issue of cadastre records and on establishing a fully reliable cadastre in Kosovo in order to provide legal certainty and to protect the rights of people with legitimate claims to property. In addition, both parties expressed their commitment to look further into the technical and political aspects of issues such as telecommunications, energy and university diplomas. The two sides also continued to cooperate on the issue of missing persons.

While such agreements are welcome, they have been overshadowed by the situation on the ground in northern Kosovo. We note with concern that the overall security situation was negatively affected by the developments on border crossings and that there was a 24 per cent increase in incidents affecting minority communities. Those developments also prevented further talks between the parties until about a week ago. The incidents during the reporting period and those that took place yesterday have underlined the fragility of the security situation in the area. That requires careful handling.

While we welcome the efforts made by the European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo (EULEX) to investigate allegations of inhuman treatment of people and illicit trafficking in human organs in Kosovo and note the appointment of the lead prosecutor, Serbia continues to be interested in a role of the Security Council in that investigation. We continue to support the proposal for the creation of a mechanism that enjoys the support and confidence of all stakeholders.

We think that a number of unresolved issues are connected with the question of status, which can be resolved only through bilateral talks between the parties. While such talks are being facilitated by the European Union, it is necessary that the international presence in Kosovo, including UNMIK, EULEX and the Kosovo Force, act with strict neutrality and impartiality and in accordance with their respective mandates, including resolution 1244 (1999). They should also ensure that there is no violence or change of the status quo by force. Unilateral actions should be avoided, and the parties should resolve sensitive issues through peaceful means on the basis of consultations and engagement with all communities.

In conclusion, we call upon the concerned parties to resolve all issues concerning Kosovo through consultation and dialogue without resorting to violence or destabilizing unilateral action. Only thus can the aspirations of all peoples concerned be met and lasting peace and stability established in the region.

Mrs. DiCarlo (United States of America): I thank Mr. Zarif for his briefing. We welcome him in his new role as the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and head of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK). I thank Foreign Minister Hoxhaj and Foreign Minister Jeremić for their presence here today and for their statements.

The most recent report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (S/2011/675) highlights the challenges to long-term peace and security in Kosovo and the Balkan region. However, it also highlights the successes that Kosovo and the region have achieved, including the 2 September agreement by Belgrade and Pristina to recognize each other's customs stamps, as well as ongoing cooperation on cultural heritage projects. Despite the recent violence caused by the acts of a few extremists, the United States remains optimistic that

Kosovo and Serbia can eventually resolve their differences and that Kosovo will continue to develop the successful institutions of a democratic nation. I would like to make four points today.

First, we echo the Secretary-General's call for the Kosovo Force (KFOR) to continue its efforts to ensure freedom of movement throughout Kosovo. The Council has affirmed that Kosovo is a single customs space. That is fully in accordance with resolution 1244 (1999) and was a key point in the Secretary-General's November 2008 report on UNMIK (S/2008/692), which the Council welcomed in its presidential statement of 26 November 2008 (S/PRST/2008/44). Kosovo therefore has the right to control its borders and to uphold the rule of law, in full cooperation with the international community. It cannot be considered unilateral action for Kosovo to enforce its customs controls. Moreover, Kosovo also coordinated its activities with the international community, including KFOR and the European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo (EULEX).

Furthermore, Kosovo announced its intention to establish full border and customs functions at the gates after Serbia agreed to recognize the Kosovo customs stamp at the 2 September dialogue. Kosovo established those functions, in accordance with an operational plan coordinated with EULEX and KFOR. The obstructions to freedom of movement are due to the actions of hard-line Kosovo Serb factions, with the support of illegal parallel institutions and, in some cases, with the endorsement of Serbian Government officials. We call on all actors, including the Serbian Government, to cooperate fully with KFOR and EULEX in the immediate removal of the remaining roadblocks, in ensuring proper controls at the borders and in supporting the rule of law through cooperation on the arrests of key criminal suspects. UNMIK can best facilitate those goals by clearly supporting the presence of Kosovo customs officials at the border gates and by emphasizing that Kosovo is a single customs space.

We remain deeply concerned by the violence in northern Kosovo during recent months, including the murder of a Kosovo police officer on 26 July; attacks on nine KFOR soldiers on 27 September; injuries to 21 KFOR soldiers on 23 and 24 November; and, on 25 November, injuries to over 25 KFOR soldiers, including two wounded by gunfire while attempting to remove roadblocks that obstructed freedom of movement.

It is a serious matter that such incidents occurred while Serbian security structures remained illegally deployed in those areas. Members of the Council should be unequivocal in condemning the violence perpetrated against KFOR and in supporting the Mission. Just as any attack on United Nations peacekeepers is unacceptable, so is any attack on KFOR.

My Government emphasizes that KFOR's actions have been and continue to be in complete accord with its mandate under resolution 1244 (1999). We commend KFOR for using minimal force in self-defence to de-escalate the situation, and we believe that Serbia's request to the Secretary-General for a special investigation into the events of 27 September is unwarranted.

Secondly, we welcome the progress that has been made by the European Union (EU) to facilitate a dialogue to date, but we note that a long list of critical issues remains unresolved. We commend the Government of Serbia for returning to the dialogue as of 21 November for the seventh meeting, in which the parties agreed on mutual acceptance of university diplomas, and we commend the Government of Kosovo for its progress in implementing previously reached agreements. We call on both sides to demonstrate flexibility as they return to the table tomorrow, 30 November. The European Union continues to have our full support in its facilitation of the dialogue. It is the primary — indeed, the only — high-level dialogue between the two countries and should be vigorously supported by all parties.

Thirdly, we would like to comment on some assertions in the Secretary-General's report. For example, the Government of Kosovo has substantially increased human and financial resources in support of its returnees, even though their number has decreased. Kosovo's funding for the reintegration of returnees increased tenfold from 2010 to 2011. In addition, the central Government has increased its coordination with municipalities and established new mechanisms for better addressing the needs of returnees. The low number of voluntary returns is not surprising, given difficult economic conditions and still unresolved property disputes. We also note that many potential returnees have integrated into their new places of residence over the past 12 years.

Furthermore, we do not agree with the claim that an embargo imposed by the Government of Kosovo has directly caused the supposed hardship in the Kosovo Serb community. Any denial of access to goods or services is a direct result of actions by northern Kosovo Serbs and their parallel institutions, which severely limited freedom of movement for people and goods by installing numerous barricades and using of threats and acts of violence. Neither KFOR nor the Government of Kosovo can be fairly accused of blocking the import of any goods.

My final point is that the United States fully supports Ambassador Clint Williamson in his new role as lead prosecutor for the international Special Investigative Task Force. The Task Force will continue the EULEX investigation into the allegations set forth in the report of the Council of Europe's Special Rapporteur, Dick Marty. EULEX's mandate is enshrined in Kosovo's Constitution and laws, and the EU Joint Action explicitly provides for EULEX to investigate and prosecute serious crimes, such as those alleged in the Marty report, and to do so independently. Furthermore, neighbouring States, including Serbia, have offered the Task Force their full cooperation. We believe there is therefore no need for the Security Council to interfere with EULEX's ongoing investigations.

The international community has invested extraordinary amounts of time and resources in maintaining peace and security in Kosovo and the Balkan region. The entire region is now on the threshold of fulfilling its Euro-Atlantic aspirations. This opportunity should not be squandered because of actions by a few extremists. In the long term, the multi-ethnic communities in Kosovo will bear full responsibility for their own future. They will decide whether their future will be characterized by deadlock and strife or dialogue and cooperation. In the short term, however, the international community must ensure that physical and political barriers do not prevent them for attaining their goals and obtaining their rights.

Mr. Tatham (United Kingdom): I would like to start by thanking the Secretary-General's Special Representative for Kosovo, Mr. Farid Zarif, for his briefing today. I am also pleased to welcome to the Council His Excellency Mr. Enver Hoxhaj, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Kosovo, and His Excellency Mr. Vuk Jeremić, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Serbia.

The United Kingdom is grateful for the Secretary-General's report (S/2011/675), which tallies with much of the European Commission's own assessment of progress in Kosovo. A central theme of both reports, with which we agree, is that while Kosovo has made progress, substantial reforms are still required. Areas where Kosovo has made particular progress this year are judicial reform and migration. In his report, the Secretary-General notes the positive trend of the Kosovo authorities' increased efforts to fight organized crime, notably through coordinated actions against human trafficking, smuggling, money laundering and drug trafficking. The European Commission's offer of a formal dialogue on visa liberalization is testament to much hard work by the Kosovo Government with respect to judicial reform and migration. I also commend Kosovo's constructive engagement in the European Union (EU)-facilitated dialogue with Serbia.

But major challenges remain. The Commission's report correctly highlights that the rule of law and minority rights are areas where further effort is needed. I welcome the Kosovo Government's commitment to securing concrete progress on these issues, and its commitment to the task of preparing for eventual EU accession.

The Secretary-General's report notes the continuing challenges in northern Kosovo, and the briefing by Special Representative Zarif highlighted very worrying events over recent days. Many citizens there are still unable to lead normal lives. They face high levels of crime, unemployment and insecurity. We encourage the Kosovo Government to intensify efforts to demonstrate its commitment to its citizens in northern Kosovo, and the concrete benefits — for example, in the rule of law, education and unemployment — it is able to bring. I urge Mr. Hoxhaj and his colleagues to pursue this with vision and energy.

But others also share the responsibility for addressing current challenges. It is imperative that all actors refrain from taking any actions that threaten the stability and security of those living in northern Kosovo. As the Secretary-General's report notes, the two northern crossings authorized by the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo in

2001 remain effectively closed by illegal roadblocks. Those who have erected those roadblocks are undermining the welfare of their fellow citizens and should remove the roadblocks immediately. Let me be clear — there can be no excuse for any attempt to restrict freedom of movement in northern Kosovo.

Nor can there be any place for violence. We deeply regret the injuries and loss of life in recent months, and express our sympathies to the families of those affected. We also condemn in the strongest possible terms the attacks on NATO peacekeepers on 27 September, 23 November and, most recently, 28 November near Zubin Potok, where protesters used explosives and small arms against Kosovo Force (KFOR) troops. Two soldiers received gunshot wounds and more than 20 others were injured as a result of Monday's violence.

It is the responsibility of all who exercise influence in northern Kosovo, including the Government of Serbia, to work actively to deter violence and restore freedom of movement. They must also give consistent and unequivocal backing to both KFOR and the European Union Rule of Law Mission (EULEX) in the exercise of their legitimate mandates to guarantee security and freedom of movement.

The Special Representative of the Secretary-General referred to the steps taken to investigate allegations of organized crime, including organ trafficking, in Kosovo. The United Kingdom welcomes the appointment of United States war crimes Ambassador Clint Williamson as head of the EU Special Investigative Task Force investigating allegations of organized crime, including organ trafficking, in Kosovo. We are also pleased that Ambassador Williamson has already been able to visit Pristina, Belgrade and Tirana. He and his Task Force have the United Kingdom's full support and confidence as they take forward their investigations in a thorough and professional manner. We are clear that EULEX has the appropriate authority and jurisdiction to take this important work forward.

The EU-facilitated dialogue is crucial to the European futures of both Kosovo and Serbia, and for the well-being of their citizens. Regional cooperation such as this is essential to the future stability and prosperity of the Western Balkans. Many of the challenges that Western Balkans countries face today, such as organized crime, can be effectively addressed only through close cooperation at both the technical and political levels.

The 21 November meeting of the dialogue was a welcome incremental step forward. Agreement was found on the mutual recognition of university diplomas, and constructive discussions were held on customs arrangements and Kosovo's participation in regional forums. Regional cooperation is an integral part of the EU accession process. That is why the United Kingdom welcomed the European Commission's emphasis on the importance of normalization of relations with Kosovo in its recent opinion on Serbia's application for EU membership. The United Kingdom is a firm supporter of Serbia's EU accession; we will do all we can to support that ambition.

There is much to welcome in the capture and extradition of Mladić and Karadžić, which served as historic moments for international justice and for the region and a testament to firm leadership. Serbia's legislative reform programme has been impressive. But it is how Serbia chooses to respond to the Commission's recommendations on Kosovo that will determine the next steps on its path towards the European Union.

Serbia must demonstrate that it is making progress in normalizing its relationship with Kosovo if EU member States are to be able to grant Serbia candidate status in December. That means, among other things, implementing fully those agreements already reached in the dialogue, engaging constructively with a view to securing agreements on other issues already under discussion, and taking concrete steps towards resolving the current tensions and restoration of freedom of movement in the north of Kosovo, including through cooperation with EULEX.

I referred a moment ago to the centrality of the dialogue to both countries' futures. I echo the call by the Secretary-General in his report for both Pristina and Belgrade to continue to show confidence in the dialogue. It is important that further progress be made at the next round of talks tomorrow. We urge both Kosovo and Serbia to work intensively and creatively towards achieving further agreements. Compromise and commitment will be essential.

Kosovo's progress as a viable independent State is irreversible. Its future belongs in the European Union along with all other countries in the Western

Balkans. My Government will continue to work tirelessly towards that goal.

Mr. Li Baodong (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): I thank Special Representative of the Secretary-General Zarif for his briefing. I listened attentively to the statements by Foreign Minister Jeremić and Mr. Hoxhaj.

For the last few days, the situation in northern Kosovo has remained tense. China is greatly concerned, as northern Kosovo is home to ethnic minorities. All parties should fully recognize the sensitivity and complexity that characterize the situation on the ground, address their differences with prudence and through dialogue and negotiation, and refrain from any action that may further aggravate tensions.

China once again calls upon the parties concerned to take measures to ease the tension in northern Kosovo and prevent the further escalation of violence. We hope that the European Union Rule of Law Mission and the International Security Force in Kosovo will play a constructive role in maintaining stability in the situation in northern Kosovo, as mandated by the resolutions of the Security Council.

The situation in Kosovo bears on the peace and stability of the Balkan region and even of the entire European region. The sovereignty and territorial integrity of Serbia should be respected. Resolution 1244 (1999) is an important legal basis for the settlement of the question of Kosovo, which should be achieved within the framework of that resolution and by the parties themselves through dialogue, consultation, negotiation and other peaceful means.

China has taken note of the resumption of talks between Serbia and Kosovo and hopes that the two parties will continue to settle their differences through negotiation. Against that background, we deplore the tension that has re-emerged in northern Kosovo.

China is deeply concerned about the illicit trafficking in human organs. Any action that violates the norms of international law, and international humanitarian law in particular, is not to be condoned. Serbia's concern about the matter is justified. We support the United Nations carrying out investigations into the relevant cases.

China appreciates the activities being carried out by the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) under the leadership of Special Representative Zarif and supports the Mission's continuing to play a positive role in maintaining peace and stability in Kosovo and the entire region of the Balkans.

Mr. Onemola (Nigeria): I would like to thank Mr. Jeremić, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Serbia, for his insightful remarks. I also thank Mr. Enver Hoxhaj for his statement. I congratulate Mr. Farid Zarif on his appointment as Special Representative of the Secretary-General and thank him for the update on the situation in Kosovo.

The last few months have been marked by intense activities related to efforts to address the border incidents in northern Kosovo. The Council met on several occasions to address the crisis and to create a non-confrontational atmosphere. In addition, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and other actors have also engaged the parties in order to arrest the deteriorating security situation and foster peace in Kosovo. Those responses were, in our view, timely, as they directly contributed to defusing the tension in the territory.

We are, however, under no illusion that the problem is solved. Yesterday's incident seems to confirm our fears. Those disturbing events, in addition to the deteriorating inter-ethnic relations, remind us once again of the imperative of a decisive response to the outstanding issues in the territory.

We share the assessment in the report of the Secretary-General (S/2011/675) that the European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo and International Security Force in Kosovo should actively engage with the northern Kosovo Serbs to increase coordination and information-sharing and build confidence in the communities. The parties should engage assiduously in promoting reconciliation and the peaceful settlement of pending issues through negotiations rather than resorting to unilateral action or violence.

It is also essential that all international presences in Kosovo strengthen their cooperation and communication in order to maximize the impact of their common efforts to maintain peace and stability on the ground. To underpin those efforts, regional and international actors must speak with one voice and work together to preserve peace and security in Kosovo and the region.

The resumption of European Union-facilitated talks is a positive development; the parties have a lot to gain from them. Indeed, the agreements reached during the meetings in September and the positive developments which followed in the area of trade are indicative of the benefits derivable from such talks. The international community, including the Security Council, should do more to build confidence and trust among the parties in order to sustain the momentum of peace talks.

We are concerned by the low number of returns recorded during the reporting period. The Special Representative has attributed those developments to, among other reasons, fewer housing reconstruction projects. It is important to invest more resources in providing the infrastructure necessary to promote the viability and conditions of return. In addition, concerted efforts on the part of law enforcement authorities in preventing harassment and attacks on returnees will go a long way towards promoting safe returns, as well as reconciliation and the long-term stability and development of Kosovo. We urge the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) and the international community to continue to promote an environment conducive to returns.

Nigeria wishes to underline the need to bring to justice those persons involved in inhuman treatment and the illicit trafficking in human organs. We are also convinced of the need to accommodate the views and concerns of all stakeholders in designing the form for these investigations, which, as we have previously indicated, will ensure that the final outcome of such investigations will enjoy the broadest possible support.

We commend UNMIK for its efforts to promote security and stability in Kosovo and the entire region. UNMIK's unrelenting engagement with the parties to the agreements with regard to such areas as the rule of law, cultural and religious heritage, returns, reconciliation and respect for human rights in Kosovo continues to enjoy strong support. We express our appreciation to Special Representative Zarif and the staff of UNMIK for their valuable contributions and ensure the Mission of Nigeria's support in its work.

Mr. Araud (France) (*spoke in French*): I would like to thank Mr. Vuk Jeremić, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Serbia, and Mr. Enver Hoxhaj, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Kosovo, for their statements. I also congratulate Mr. Farid Zarif on his appointment.

The situation in northern Kosovo has been the subject of numerous Council meetings since the end of July, and I will therefore skip the origins and evolution of the incidents, which have been covered in detail in the Secretary-General's report (S/2011/675). However, new confrontations have recently occurred that have resulted in about 25 wounded Kosovo Force (KFOR) soldiers, among whom two were hit by bullets. Such violent attacks against the international mission charged with guaranteeing the safety of the civilian populations are unacceptable. France condemns those deliberate attacks against staff of NATO and the European Union, who are carrying out tasks under a United Nations mandate.

The responses of the European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo (EULEX) and KFOR in confronting those acts of violence have been adequate and proportional. Those interventions in consultation with the local authorities have led to reduced tensions, but the roadblocks in northern Kosovo continue to impede implementation of the international contingents' mandate and to make civilian life difficult. We therefore call for the immediate removal of the roadblocks and for respect for the right of freedom of movement in accordance with resolution 1244 (1999).

A return to calm is above all in the interest of the inhabitants of northern Kosovo, who are the first to suffer from the impediments to free movement. Neither the international community nor neighbouring States desire to see the inhabitants or their territory isolated or subject to control by the criminal networks responsible for violence, which is not motivated by nationalism, but because border controls make the trafficking by which they earn their living more difficult. Our adversary is the organized criminal networks that manipulate the population, not the population itself.

The resumption of commercial relations between Serbia and Kosovo, the EULEX presence at Gates 1 and 31 in conformity with its 2008 United Nations mandate, and the return to dialogue facilitated by the European Union between Belgrade and Pristina on 21 November and tomorrow, 30 November, are positive developments that must be encouraged.

A return to calm is in the interests of Belgrade and Pristina, which want to move closer to the

European Union. The differences between the parties must be resolved through dialogue and a spirit of compromise. We call upon Serbia and Kosovo to pursue that dialogue responsibly and to focus their efforts on accession to the European Union, based on the recommendations contained in the last progress report of the European Commission and to abstain from all acts, and statements that could worsen tensions.

Finally, we welcome Mr. Williamson's appointment to lead the EULEX Special Investigative Task Force in charge of investigating the allegations of illicit trafficking in human organs, as described in the report of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, which was published at the end of 2010.

France calls upon all States of the region to promote cooperation with EULEX and welcomes their expressed readiness to cooperate with the investigation. EULEX thus has the resources to undertake a credible investigation that should be carried out calmly without any undue influence being brought to bear in the context of dialogue.

Mr. Churkin (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We thank Mr. Zarif for presenting the report of the Secretary-General on the work of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) (S/2011/675). I would like to take the opportunity to congratulate him on his official appointment as Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of UNMIK and to wish him successful and productive work in this important post.

The Russian Federation welcomes the participation in today's meeting of the Mr. Vuk Jeremić, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Serbia, and shares his concerns.

We have listened attentively to the statement of Mr. Hoxhaj. We note the non-compliance with the provisions of resolution 1244 (1999). The position of the Russian Federation in not recognizing Kosovo's unilateral declaration of independence remains unchanged. Resolution 1244 (1999) remains in full force and is still considered by all as the binding international legal base for settling Kosovo and providing security in the area.

We believe it important for the interested parties to resume their dialogue aimed at a formula for a durable settlement of the Kosovo problem. Unilateral actions of Pristina and the international presence in northern Kosovo are unacceptable.

The Russian Federation is seriously concerned by the abrupt deterioration in the situation in the northern part of the district. There have even been certain flagrant incidents. For example, on 9 November in one of the neighbourhoods of Kosovska Mitrovica, a mixed ethnic area, a group of Albanians opened machine gun fire on three Serbs, one of whom died in hospital shortly thereafter. It is quite telling that during the burial service on the shore of the Ibar River, Albanians partied openly to loud music.

The Kosovo Force (KFOR) is also forcefully pressuring Kosovo Serbs. Only yesterday, the two groups were engaged in yet another skirmish, as NATO forces were capturing a Serbian barricade in the municipality of Zubin Potok. Dozens of casualties occurred on both sides. The KFOR command has issued threats of using their weapons with lethal intent. It is patently obvious to us that that type of situation could be avoided if KFOR focused not on removing the Serbian barricades that were erected in reaction to Pristina's provocative attempts to take control over the administrative border with Serbia, but on providing security in the interest of all of the district's inhabitants as per its mandate.

The statements of some of our Council colleagues to the effect that the actions of KFOR and the European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo (EULEX) are somehow ensuring the protection of freedom of movement as well as a single customs space for Kosovo as provided under resolution 1244 (1999) are nothing more than a bit of semantic sleight of hand. Let us not forget that those mandates were adopted under conditions when, under resolution 1244 (1999), Kosovo enjoyed substantial autonomy as a union republic of Yugoslavia. The resolution also called for protection of the interests of the Serbian population of the district and for providing for its security. We thus oppose selective implementation of the mandates of KFOR and EULEX, which openly plays into the hands of the Kosovo authorities.

The use of force to implement legislation of the so-called Republic of Kosovo is outside the mandates of those international entities and violates the principle of their neutral status. In that context and bearing in mind the communications on that topic submitted by

the Government of Serbia to the Secretary-General, the Russian Federation calls for a thorough investigation of the incident of 27 September, where KFOR used weapons that resulted in civilian casualties.

We are left to wonder: Why is it that after 12 years of efforts, the international community has been unable to ensure safe living conditions for one of the parties to the Kosovo conflict? In that regard, we believe it would be advisable that in his next report, the Secretary-General conduct an in-depth analysis of the ways in which the international presences are implementing their security mandates to protect the rights of the entire population of Kosovo.

In equal measure, we call for a full and objective investigation of the facts related to the illicit trafficking in human organs uncovered by Mr. Dick Marty, Special Rapporteur of the Council of Europe's Parliamentary Assembly. In our view, such an investigation should proceed under United Nations auspices and report to the Security Council. Here we note the extremely unsatisfactory situation in Kosovo relating to witness protection, which has been confirmed by the Council of Europe. Those facts have been blatantly ignored, and as a result key witnesses have been eliminated.

The security situation in the district remains tense, owing most of all to Pristina's growing tendency to use force to control Serb-inhabited regions. Attacks such as those of 2004 must not be allowed. The situation regarding the return of internally displaced persons (IDPs) to Kosovo, most of whom are Serb, remains unsatisfactory. There are many reasons for that, including the fact that the IDPs have no assurance of safety. The ransacking of homes and theft of property of Kosovo Serbs has been going on with impunity. International presences must take all necessary measures to protect Serbian Orthodox holy sites and believers. We share the concern of the authorities of Serbia and the Serbian Orthodox Church with the situation developing in relation to the handover by NATO forces of protective responsibilities of significant Serbian cultural and religious heritage sites to the Kosovo police. These actions could cause additional security tensions in Kosovo.

The Mission in Kosovo, on the basis of its Security Council mandate, must play as active a role as possible in promoting the Kosovo settlement process. We call on UNMIK to fulfil its duties, including with regard to the external representation of Kosovo in regional and international organizations and mechanisms. We hope the new Head of UNMIK will provide the corresponding impulse to the Mission's work.

We believe that Council measures must send an unambiguous signal to both the Kosovo parties and the international presences on the need to refrain from violence and to continue the dialogue. The Russian delegation will circulate a draft presidential statement for the press.

Mr. Wittig (Germany): Let me join my colleagues in congratulating Mr. Zarif on his recent appointment as Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Kosovo and welcoming His Excellency Mr. Vuk Jeremić, Foreign Minister of Serbia, and His Excellency Mr. Enver Hoxhaj, Foreign Minister of Kosovo.

We view the situation in the northern part of Kosovo with great concern. The last month has seen a significant deterioration in the security situation because of provocative action by Kosovo's Serb demonstrators. Only yesterday we witnessed a new level of violence perpetrated by Kosovo Serb demonstrators against soldiers of the Kosovo Force (KFOR). While implementing their mandate to ensure freedom of movement, KFOR troops were attacked with stones, fireworks and Molotov cocktails. Thirty KFOR soldiers from Germany and Austria were wounded. Among them, two German soldiers sustained gunshot wounds from small arms fired from the sidelines of the demonstration.

Let me make this point in no uncertain terms: any use of violence against KFOR or the other international presences is unacceptable. It must be condemned in the strongest terms. Both KFOR and the European Union Rule of Law Mission (EULEX) are fulfilling their mandate to ensure and maintain a safe environment, including freedom of movement, and to establish the rule of law. They act in full compliance with the relevant resolutions of the Security Council. Attacks against KFOR are thus attacks against the integrity and authority of the Security Council.

We call on all citizens in Kosovo, including in northern Kosovo, to refrain from any violence. We also call on the Serbian authorities to exert their influence on those responsible for inciting and resorting to violence.

We have full confidence in the work of KFOR and EULEX. All parties concerned have to cooperate fully with the international presences. Erecting barricades to restrict the freedom of movement in this part of Kosovo is unacceptable. In this context, I would like to welcome the call by President Tadić this morning on the people in northern Kosovo to dismantle the roadblocks and to refrain from violence. We explicitly welcome that call by President Tadić. Our objective is peace and stability in the region with a clear European perspective.

It is also pointed out in the report of the Secretary-General (S/2011/675) that the outstanding issues can be resolved only through peaceful means. The European Union-mandated dialogue is at the core of the process that leads to peace and stability in the region.

Germany actively supports the process of dialogue under the auspices of Mrs. Ashton. This open and constructive dialogue is designed to improve the daily lives of citizens in both countries, to promote the normalization of relations between Serbia and Kosovo, and to pave the way for both countries to a secure, European future. We thus welcome the new round of bilateral talks that took place on 21 and 22 November, which produced an agreement by both parties on mutual recognition of school and university diplomas. We call on both sides to build on the positive momentum and reach further tangible results in the meeting on 30 November and to ensure swift implementation of the agreements already reached.

We deplore the increase in incidents of crime, including those affecting minority communities, as described in the Secretary-General's report. Widespread organized crime remains a serious issue in Kosovo. Nonetheless, we welcome the efforts by the Kosovo authorities to address this issue. We share the observation in the report on the overall positive developments with regard to the rule of law in Kosovo and the positive impact on the everyday life of the citizens of Kosovo and the region. We also appreciate the facilitating role played by UNMIK, be it with respect to cooperation between Kosovo authorities and INTERPOL, or between the Serbian and the Kosovo Ministries of Justice.

EULEX has achieved further progress in recent months in its full investigation of the allegations of despicable crimes committed against Serbian nationals during, and after the end of, the armed conflict in Kosovo. With the appointment of Mr. Clint Williamson as lead prosecutor for the Special Investigative Task Force, a distinguished and capable prosecutor has been tasked to lead the investigation. This development has also been welcomed by Foreign Minister Jeremić. In particular, I welcome that Mr. Williamson has received full support from Kosovo, Serbia and Albania.

We have already stated that in our view that there is no doubt that the EU Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo has the capacities, the competence and the jurisdiction to carry out these investigations. EULEX has Germany's full support and confidence. EULEX has opened a preliminary investigation, and EULEX prosecutors have met with Senator Marty to discuss his findings. The Government of Kosovo is ready to cooperate fully. EULEX has established good cooperation with the authorities in Belgrade and Tirana. EULEX prosecutors have already met twice with the General Prosecutor of Albania on the matter. We therefore do not believe it is necessary to set up an additional mechanism for investigations, in the light of the EULEX mandate.

In conclusion, let me underline once more that Germany will continue to closely monitor the developments in Kosovo. We remain committed to the European perspective of the whole region. We appreciate the contribution by UNMIK to peace and stability and commend the dedication and service of its staff.

Mr. Salam (Lebanon) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset I wish to congratulate Mr. Farid Zarif on his appointment as Special Representative of the Secretary-General in Kosovo and Head of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK). I wish him every success, and I thank him for his briefing today. I also would like to welcome His Excellency the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Serbia, Mr. Jeremić, and to thank him for his statement. I also wish to thank Mr. Hoxhaj for his statement.

I wish to renew our support for the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo, for its role in facilitating reconciliation, supporting security and enhancing human rights. We also wish to indicate the positive role that it plays in several issues, such as missing persons and the protection of religious and cultural heritage, as well as in facilitating contacts between the different groups. We consider it important

that coordination and cooperation continue between UNMIK, the European Union Rule of Law Mission (EULEX) and the Kosovo Force (KFOR) within the status-neutral framework in Kosovo, as stated in resolution 1244 (1999).

With regard to security, we would like to note the coordinated measures adopted by local authorities to combat money-laundering, smuggling and the drug trade, and the resulting decrease in the crime rate.

We share the concern of the Secretary-General over the deterioration of the security situation in northern Kosovo and the accompanying tension and polarization among the different communities in the north. The developments concerning Gates 1 and 31 have shown, over the past few months, that any outstanding issue between the two sides may quickly become contentious and a source of tension and violence, seriously hampering the dialogue process. It is therefore important, in the coming stage, to refrain from taking any unilateral action or resorting to violence, and to focus efforts on achieving reconciliation among the communities and setting the stage for dialogue.

In that context, we urge all influential parties in the region to play a facilitating and supportive role in efforts to build confidence among the communities and the parties. That will have a positive influence on the dialogue and on the security situation in the north.

We take note of the periodic coordination meetings held with representatives of northern Kosovo Serbs, the United Nations and the European Union Missions and KFOR, as part of efforts to build confidence among local communities.

We welcome the continued cooperation between Belgrade and Pristina, in coordination with the International Committee of the Red Cross, to clarify the fate of those persons still missing. Despite the fact that progress in disclosing the fate of missing persons is still slow, we nevertheless view such efforts as a key component of any reconciliation among communities.

In conclusion, as to allegations of inhuman treatment of people and illicit trafficking in human organs in Kosovo in 1999, we stress the importance of adopting measures that will guarantee effective protection for witnesses. We call for a comprehensive and transparent investigation that will reveal the truth and hold the perpetrators to account, as there can be no genuine reconciliation or sustainable peace without justice.

Mr. Mashabane (South Africa): South Africa would like to congratulate Mr. Farid Zarif on his appointment as the new Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Kosovo and Head of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo. We also thank him for his briefing. We also join others in welcoming Foreign Minister Jeremić of Serbia to the Council and in thanking him for his statement. We also welcome Mr. Hoxhaj and thank him for his statement as well.

South Africa remains concerned about the developments in North Kosovo. We condemn all forms of violence by all sides, including the shooting that wounded NATO soldiers and injured more than 20 others, as violence threatens peace and stability in the region. All parties should exercise restraint and refrain from unilateral actions and the use of force, since that would reverse the gains made by the parties in their dialogue processes and ultimately make reconciliation more difficult to achieve.

My delegation is also concerned about the deterioration in inter-ethnic relations throughout Kosovo, which in our view does not contribute to the reconciliation and dialogue process. A number of incidents that have been reported by the Secretary-General are of concern to us, including the contamination of a well supplying potable water and the desecration of cemeteries.

Tensions are worsened by the perception of Kosovo Serbs regarding the lack of status neutrality of the international presence, especially following the actions of the Kosovo Force (KFOR) and the European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo (EULEX) in north Kosovo.

South Africa reiterates its position that Security Council resolution 1244 (1999) remains in force and forms the basis for resolving the situation in Kosovo. It is therefore incumbent on the international presences in Kosovo, including KFOR and EULEX, to maintain a status-neutral position in the execution of their respective mandates, in line with the presidential statement (S/PRST/2008/44) adopted by the Council in November 2008.

South Africa continues to support the dialogue process between the parties, as mandated by the

General Assembly. Moreover, we believe that the resumption of talks between the parties is an important confidence-building measure that should improve trust and allow them to address all outstanding issues. We agree with the Secretary-General's observation that unresolved issues threaten peace and stability in the region. In that regard, my delegation urges all parties to show cooperation and flexibility in finding solutions to the outstanding issues, including border concerns. Negotiations remain the only way to produce a mutually beneficial and sustainable solution.

With regard to the allegations of trafficking in human organs, we reiterate our position that a credible, thorough, impartial and independent inquiry into those allegations should be conducted. The death of a key witness in a war crimes case raises concerns about witness protection. In that regard, we share the concerns of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights that an independent witness- and victim-protection system is necessary.

In conclusion, South Africa once more urges both sides to refrain from taking any actions that will undermine the achievements attained in the dialogue process. We therefore call on the parties to show flexibility, with a view to enhancing their engagement in order to resolve outstanding matters and for reconciliation to prevail.

Mr. Osorio (Colombia) (*spoke in Spanish*): I would first like to welcome Mr. Farid Zarif, Special Representative of the Secretary-General, and congratulate him on his recent appointment. We thank him for his briefing on the situation in Kosovo and for the accompanying report (S/2011/675), which provides a detailed description of recent events, the work of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK), which he leads, and efforts to find lasting peace in the region.

We regret the various incidents that have occurred in border areas, the most recent being yesterday, when several NATO soldiers were injured and two were shot as they attempted to dismantle roadblocks that had been set up in some areas. We also regret the death of a Serbian civilian and two other individuals who were injured at the beginning of this month.

Colombia urges the parties to adopt measures that will help to reduce tensions and prevent the emergence of new crises. At the same time, we encourage the parties to renew their efforts to achieve peaceful coexistence and deepen their commitment to dialogue in order to resolve the issues under dispute.

We thank Foreign Ministers Vuk Jeremić and Enver Hoxhaj for their statements, which show that there is clear intent to engage in dialogue and that progress has been made in that regard. However, their remarks also reveal a degree of harshness. I believe that it is crucial to find some terms for coming together. In that spirit, we call on local authorities to improve their mechanisms for cooperation, good-neighbourliness and the early settlement of disputes. We are convinced that the resulting arrangements will always play a role in creating unity and harmony, and will surely set the best example on both sides of the border.

We note with optimism tomorrow's meeting between the parties, to be held in Brussels, and hope that steps will be taken there to consolidate the process on the basis of agreements reached in previous rounds of talks, including those held in that city on 21 and 22 November. The meeting will provide an opportunity for convergence and, in turn, make it possible for the parties to resolve their problems. We hope that progress is made on practical matters and in areas of cooperation, such as the energy and telecommunications sectors, as has been done with regard to the recognition of university degrees.

My country takes an optimistic view of the area's economic outlook. Its proximity to the European Union makes it a valid trading partner, which augurs well for further physical, customs and transport integration. The parties can take the first step in that direction by avoiding confrontational language, which will facilitate efforts to reach agreements that will benefit all parties.

With regard to allegations involving the crimes of murder, inhuman treatment of people, illegal trafficking in human organs and violations of human dignity, which we have addressed here on several occasions, we note with interest the efforts being made to pursue the ongoing investigations and trials as described in the most recent report. We hope that in the future, it will be possible to identify those responsible for those crimes and bring them to justice.

We would underscore what was said in the report with regard to the problem of missing persons, which remains a major obstacle to community reconciliation and continues to undermine the returns process.

Colombia believes that those investigations must be fully completed so as to lay the groundwork for social reconciliation and peaceful coexistence.

Finally, according to the latest report, the process of returns has been slow. We therefore call for extraordinary efforts to establish the conditions necessary to allow speedy returns to communities in a climate of safety and confidence.

Mrs. Viotti (Brazil): I welcome His Excellency Mr. Vuk Jeremić, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Serbia, and thank him for his statement. I also welcome Mr. Farid Zarif and congratulate him on his appointment. I thank him for his briefing and wish him a successful tenure as Head of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK). I also thank Mr. Enver Hoxhaj for his remarks.

Brazil wishes that we could dedicate a larger part of our statement today to positive developments during the reporting period, such as progress on the issue of stamps and trade flows. Unfortunately, recent negative events have taken the forefront. Brazil is concerned over the increase of tensions between Belgrade and Pristina, in particular clashes between the population in the area and the Kosovo Force and police forces. We join the Secretary-General in calling on both sides, as well as on the communities on the ground, to act with restraint and patience as they seek a peaceful solution to the crisis.

The underlying tensions that have translated into these incidents are a reminder of the urgent need to address the broader unresolved issues in the region. A spirit of compromise must guide actions by all parties. Brazil expects that discussions between Belgrade and Pristina, which have been following a positive course, will resume shortly in order to build confidence and to promote progress that benefit the populations of the area.

Brazil reaffirms its belief that resolution 1244 (1999) offers an adequate framework for a negotiated settlement, under the auspices of the Security Council and with the support of UNMIK and regional organizations.

We remain concerned over the allegations of inhuman treatment of people and trafficking in human organs in Kosovo. We are encouraged by the willingness of the parties to cooperate in the investigation of these cases, which must be subject to independent and credible scrutiny. In this regard, we note the ongoing investigations being carried out by the European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo, and reiterate our interest in exploring options that take into account the need to involve various jurisdictions and the importance of ensuring consistency with resolution 1244 (1999).

UNMIK's role is crucial to the stability of the region. We commend the positive work the Mission has undertaken to facilitate communications between the parties and to create conditions for reaching agreement on a number of issues. The Council should continue to keep political developments in Kosovo under close review and to encourage further dialogue between Belgrade and Pristina. Every effort must be made to find creative solutions to the pending issues, while maintaining peace in the region. The long-term benefits of peaceful dialogue between the parties must be made evident to all stakeholders.

Mr. Moungara Moussotsi (Gabon) (*spoke in French*): My delegation wishes to thank Mr. Farid Zarif, the new Head of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK), for his briefing on the situation in that country. We wish once again to express our appreciation to him and his team for their commitment to peace and stability in Kosovo.

I also welcome the presence here today of the Ministers of Serbia and Kosovo, and I thank them for their respective statements.

My delegation will focus its statement on the security and political aspects of the situation, particularly in northern Kosovo, which has drawn the attention of UNMIK and other international missions operating under resolution 1244 (1999).

The events of July, which we all regretted, contributed in large measure to the deterioration of the security situation in northern Kosovo. According to the report of the Secretary-General before us (S/2011/675), they have also hindered the continuation of political dialogue. As recently as yesterday, an incident arose in which two soldiers of the Kosovo Force (KFOR) were wounded, which we wholeheartedly deplore. We call on all parties to exercise restraint and to resort to dialogue and cooperation to resolve issues of common interest. Peace and sustainable security in the region can be established only through such means.

The efforts of the international organizations — UNMIK, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo and KFOR — should be welcomed, as should the resumption on 21 November in Brussels of discussions between Belgrade and Pristina. My delegation believes that these discussions, pertaining to subjects that are vital to peace and security in the Balkans, must be strongly supported by the international community.

Furthermore, the conclusion of an agreement on customs stamps in Kosovo and the resumption of trade between Kosovo and Serbia are achievements that deserve the support of the Council. We call on the parties to be equally resolved to end the current impasse with respect to the reopening of the northern border posts. My country calls on all parties to refrain from taking any unilateral action that could spark new tensions.

As we have often said in prior statements, we remain convinced that finding a settlement in Kosovo is the primary responsibility of the parties directly involved. Indeed, it is up to them to establish the conditions necessary to a peaceful settlement of the situation, which would contribute greatly to the implementation of the European perspectives of Serbia and Kosovo. Lastly, we reiterate that the international community should continue its financial support for the protection of cultural and religious heritage and for the work of the Working Group on Missing persons. It should also facilitate the return of displaced persons to their homes.

Ms. Čolaković (Bosnia and Herzegovina): On behalf of the delegation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, I would like to express our appreciation to the Secretary-General for his comprehensive report (S/2011/675). We also welcome the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Kosovo, Mr. Farid Zarif, and thank him for his comprehensive briefing. We would like to express our support to the work of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK).

We welcome the participation in today's meeting of His Excellency Mr. Vuk Jeremić, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Serbia, as well as Mr. Enver Hoxhaj.

Bosnia and Herzegovina reiterates its appreciation for UNMIK's efforts in fulfilling its mandate, including support for the process of reconciliation, facilitation of constructive dialogue and regional cooperation, its focus on mediation between the communities, as well as its support to minority communities.

During the reporting period, as a result of recent incidents that we strongly condemn, the security situation, mainly in northern Kosovo, has been deteriorating. Furthermore, these latest developments have also resulted in the worsening of inter-ethnic relations throughout Kosovo, the polarization of political positions, and the widening of gaps between the communities. The aforementioned incidents and the overall situation in Kosovo are causes of concern for our delegation.

Taking into account all the circumstances, now more than ever we remain convinced that sustained dialogue is indispensable to achieving mutually acceptable solutions to all outstanding issues in Kosovo. It is therefore necessary that both sides remain committed to the resumption of dialogue on pending issues, facilitated by the European Union. We believe that the international community, as well as all relevant stakeholders, should continue their efforts to create conditions for the peaceful resolution of long-standing issues for the benefit of all.

It is our well-known position that the rule of law is crucial to stability and progress in the Balkans. In that regard, we reiterate our support to the activities of UNMIK and the European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo, operating within the status-neutral framework of the United Nations.

In the context of improving inter-community dialogue and building confidence among the parties, we believe in the crucial role of UNMIK and welcome its efforts to decrease tensions, draw attention to common needs and provide conditions conducive to sustainable returns.

The problem of missing persons remains a great challenge to the process of reconciliation between the communities and prolongs the process of returns. In that context, we take positive note of the fact that the Belgrade-Pristina Working Group on Missing Persons resumed its activities and cooperation on that important issue. Despite all efforts, the number of voluntary returns remains low, including due to socio-economic difficulties associated with the reintegration of returnees and the tense security situation.

During the reporting period, UNMIK, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Danish Refugee Council facilitated several go-and-see and go-and-inform visits, which provided displaced persons an opportunity to visit their properties and make first-hand assessments of conditions in the receiving community.

In conclusion, we reiterate our enduring position that stability and security in Kosovo are of great significance for achieving lasting peace and prosperity in our region. We consider that the international community should continue to play an important role in supporting the aspirations of the countries of the region towards their integration into European and Euro-Atlantic structures.

Finally, Bosnia and Herzegovina commends the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo, operating within the framework of resolution 1244 (1999), and its role of maintaining peace, security, stability and respect of human rights in Kosovo.

The President: I shall now make a brief statement in my national capacity.

Like previous speakers, I thank Special Representative of the Secretary-General Farid Zarif for his comprehensive briefing. I congratulate him on his appointment and wish him all the best in his challenging tasks. I also thank Mr. Vuk Jeremić, Foreign Minister of Serbia, and Mr. Enver Hoxjah, Foreign Minister of Kosovo, for their statements.

I start by expressing our deep concern about the escalation of violence directed against United Nations-mandated international forces in Kosovo, which has resulted in a significant number of wounded, among whom were 12 Portuguese soldiers, as mentioned by Mr. Zarif. Portugal condemns, in the strongest terms, those attacks and reiterates that all attempts to hamper, by the use of force, the freedom of movement in northern Kosovo are totally unacceptable and can only worsen an already very tense situation. Portugal appeals, in unequivocal terms, for restraint. It is fundamental to deflate the present situation in order to prevent an even more dangerous escalation of tensions, further bloodshed and the worsening of the situation of tens of thousands of civilians.

Strengthened political dialogue is, from our point of view, the only way to achieve that goal. In that regard, the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) has undertaken serious efforts to bring together relevant political players in the north of Kosovo and to supplement several failures in fundamental supplies, thereby contributing importantly to a safer and more secure environment. Those efforts should be commended.

Also on the issue of political dialogue, we welcome the resumption of the dialogue between Belgrade and Pristina on 21 November. The latest agreement between the parties on the mutual recognition of university diplomas is a welcome development. Portugal believes that the European perspective of Serbia and Kosovo must be a constant reminder to both parties of the importance of remaining constructively engaged in their negotiations. While we are aware of the challenges ahead, we stress that time is of the paramount importance on this issue. We appeal to both parties to renew their efforts, both internally and among each other, to make headway on all fundamental issues.

We would like to underline the importance of some of the issues mentioned in the UNMIK report (S/2011/675). We welcome the fact that several important Serbia Orthodox Church events took place in Kosovo without incident. The freedom of worship is an essential element of democratic conviviality and respect for the rule of law, and must be protected. Unfortunately, there was a worrying increase in incidents affecting minority communities Kosovo-wide. Indeed, progress in upholding minority rights is fundamental to peace and security in Kosovo and in the Western Balkans.

On the report of the European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo (EULEX), I would like to underline that the Mission's essential role in promoting and upholding the rule of law and law enforcement in Kosovo should be duly appreciated. Portugal has consistently been a strong promoter of the role that the Rule of Law Mission plays in Kosovo. But Portugal continues to believe that the Council would benefit from hearing more directly about the work of EULEX and its future perspectives on the investigations it has undertaken in areas as diverse and as serious as human organ trafficking, tax evasion, border control and the fight against corruption.

My final words are to express my appreciation for, and encouragement of, the work of the various

international presences in Kosovo. Winter is a particularly challenging time in Kosovo, and may prove to be the source of more instability. The mandates of UNMIK, the Kosovo Force and EULEX, among others, aim to correspond as much as possible to guaranteeing peace, stability and justice to the country. They will continue to do so under the Security Council's oversight and with its help.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

Mr. Jeremić has asked for the floor to make a further statement. I now call on him.

Mr. Jeremić (Serbia): I would like to briefly address some of the remarks made in the Chamber this morning.

First of all, I would like to refer to the so-called parallel structures. In order to have something parallel, one needs to have something to which it is parallel. Those are the only structures that exist in that part of our sovereign province. Those are the only structures that are providing any kind of order in that part of the territory. There are no other structures. Truly parallel structures are ones that are not in line with resolution 1244 (1999), but that are organized based on the unilateral declaration of independence of 17 February 2008.

I think that the lack of trust is what is really at the heart of what we are discussing here. I remember the time when there was very little trust in Serbian institutions in Kosovo and when the whole series of parallel structures — actually, the entire life of Kosovo Albanians — was organized in a way that was entirely parallel to the legal institutions of the Republic of Serbia. At that time, every single country in the world recognized the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republic of Serbia. I am referring to the pre-1999 period. They were structures that had absolute parallelism with the legal structures of the Republic of Serbia, because the Albanians had no trust in the structures of the Republic of Serbia. Today, the situation is pretty much parallel in the north. Kosovo Serbs have zero trust in the structures that are Pristina-based. That is simply a fact of life and a part of the reality that we have to take into account when we try to resolve peacefully the problem that we have at hand.

In response to a statement made here with regard to the Ahtisaari Plan, I would like to underline that this Plan was not in line with resolution 1244 (1999). It was discussed here in the Chamber on numerous occasions and failed to receive the support of the Council. I would like to remind members that, despite numerous attempts, the Ahtisaari Plan did not receive the endorsement of the Council. For us in Serbia, it is null and void.

In speaking about human organ harvesting and trafficking, one country here today repeatedly referred to that as organized crime. It may be organized crime if one is trying to sell somebody's organs on the international black market for organs, but it is a war crime when several hundred civilians are allegedly taken to a clinic to be killed and their organs removed during a conflict. That is a war crime, not organized crime, and it should be treated as such.

All of the war crimes committed in the wars of Yugoslav succession have so far been treated in the same way, with the Security Council being kept abreast of what was going on in the investigations. What we are asking for is simply to be treated in the same way and that this serious, heinous allegation of a war crime be treated in the same way as any other war crime, namely, that it not be hidden from the international community. That is what the families of the victims demand.

Serbia strongly reiterates the need for transparency and fairness in this investigation. I appeal to the members of the Security Council to allow fairness and transparency to prevail for the sake of the families of the victims.

Finally, I would like to underline once again that Serbia has made and will continue to make strong calls for peace and stability inside the territory. President Tadić today made a very strong call for that, and I wish to reiterate it here in this Chamber. We need to refrain from the use of force and from violence. Barricades are not in anyone's interest, but they must not be removed violently; that is only going to lead to more violence. The best way to ensure full freedom of movement in the territory is through dialogue, engagement and close work between the parties, especially the parties on the ground, all of which Serbia strongly supports.

The President: I now give the floor to Mr. Hoxhaj.

Mr. Hoxhaj: I am going to make some remarks not about the past but about the future.

First, I think that it is necessary for all sides to call for a stop to the violence in the northern part of Kosovo, and for the situation there to show some improvement 12 years after the war.

Secondly, security and stability in that part of Kosovo, within Kosovo as a whole and in the region are always going to be a challenge as long as security forces, paramilitary organizations and police forces from the Republic of Serbia are operating in that part of Kosovo. Accordingly, it is really time for Serbia to dismantle these structures. We have seen the same phenomenon occur everywhere in the former Yugoslavia over the past 20 years; that has been the situation from 1991 until today.

Thirdly, we are very interested in solving all problems through dialogue, and we call on Serbia to start implementing the agreements reached in Brussels. To date, there has been the possibility of seeing implementation only of the agreement on customs stamps, but nothing else. Nothing else has been implemented until now.

Regarding the barricades, the European Union insists on two principles — freedom of movement of peoples and freedom of movement of goods. If Serbia aspires to European Union candidate status but is putting up barricades in a part of another country, I think that is the best evidence of how interested Serbia is in a European future.

I will stop here. I am not interested in bothering the Council with more remarks. At the same time, I call on my friends not to bring the spirit of a Balkan country election campaign into a meeting of the Security Council.

The President: There are no further speakers inscribed on my list. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 1.35 p.m.

United Nations S/PV.6671

Security Council

Sixty-sixth year

Provisional

6671st meeting

Tuesday, 29 November 2011, 3 p.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Moraes Cabral	(Portugal)
Members:	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Ms. Čolaković
	Brazil	Mr. Garcia
	China	Mr. Yang Tao
	Colombia	Mr. Osorio
	France	Mr. Bonne
	Gabon	Mrs. Bongo
	Germany	Mr. Eick
	India	Mr. Kumar
	Lebanon	Mr. Salam
	Nigeria	Mr. Amieyeofori
	Russian Federation	Mr. Zhukov
	South Africa	Mr. Mashabane
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Parham
	United States of America	Mrs. DiCarlo

Agenda

The situation concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo

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The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo

The President: The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

Members of the Council have before them document S/2011/737, which contains the text of a draft resolution submitted by France.

It is my understanding that the Council is ready to proceed to the vote on the draft resolution before it. I shall put the draft resolution to the vote now.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, China, Colombia, France, Gabon, Germany, India, Lebanon, Nigeria, Portugal, Russian Federation, South Africa, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and United States of America.

The President: There were 15 votes in favour. The draft resolution has been adopted unanimously as resolution 2021 (2011).

The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Security Council will remain seized of the matter.

The meeting rose at 3.15 p.m.

United Nations S/PV.6672

Security Council

Sixty-sixth year

Provisional

6672nd meeting

Wednesday, 30 November 2011, 11.05 a.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Moraes Cabral	(Portugal)
Members:	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Mr. Barbalić
	Brazil	Mrs. Viotti
	China	Mr. Yang Tao
	Colombia	Mr. Osorio
	France	Mr. Briens
	Gabon	Mr. Moungara Moussotsi
	Germany	Mr. Wittig
	India	Mr. Hardeep Singh Puri
	Lebanon	Mr. Salam
	Nigeria	Mr. Amieyeofori
	Russian Federation	Mr. Churkin
	South Africa	Mr. Mashabane
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir Mark Lyall Grant
	United States of America	Mrs. DiCarlo

Agenda

Implementation of the note by the President of the Security Council (S/2010/507)

Letter dated 18 November 2011 from the Permanent Representative of Portugal to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2011/726)

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room U-506.

11-61237 (E)

Please recycle

The meeting was called to order at 11.05 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Implementation of the note by the President of the Security Council (S/2010/507)

Letter dated 18 November 2011 from the Permanent Representative of Portugal to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2011/726)

The President: In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representatives of Australia, Belgium, Costa Rica, Egypt, Finland, Guatemala, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Japan, Jordan, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Mexico, Morocco, New Zealand, Singapore, Slovenia, Spain, the Sudan, and Switzerland to participate in this meeting.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2011/726, which contains a letter dated 18 November 2011 from the Permanent Representative of Portugal to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting a concept paper on the item under consideration.

I shall now give the floor to members of the Security Council.

Mr. Barbalić (Bosnia and Herzegovina): First, I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for having convened this open debate on working methods of the Security Council. This is the fourth open debate on the topic, which reflects the increased interest on the part of the entire United Nations membership, as well as the increased transparency of the Security Council in its work and its intention to interact with the general membership when addressing matters of mutual concern and benefit.

Bosnia and Herzegovina has chaired the Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions with great interest and a firm commitment to further promoting the transparency and efficiency of the Security Council's work. With that in mind, we organized a workshop on working methods for the United Nations membership, in cooperation with Japan, our predecessor in chairing the Informal Working Group. We also participated in the meeting of the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Revitalization of the General Assembly.

The Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions has held four meetings. Allow me to draw attention to some of the issues discussed among the members of the Informal Working Group in those meetings.

With regard to streamlining the summary statement on matters of which the Council is seized, we began looking at ways to reduce the list of those issues under active consideration. The present guidelines governing the maintenance of the summary statement are contained in section IX of the note by the President of 26 July 2010 (S/2010/507). However, this is an ongoing process, and further progress is needed, bearing in mind that paragraph 53 of document S/2010/507 provides for the Council to review the summary statement at the beginning of each year to determine if the Council has concluded its consideration of any of the listed items. Therefore, January 2012 might be an appropriate time to take up this matter.

We also discussed the evenness of the Council's work, which implies a more even distribution of the adoption of resolutions pertaining to mandate cycles and reporting.

During the meeting held on 28 April 2011 on General Assembly revitalization, we witnessed the interest of the United Nations Member States in possible ways of involving them in matters of the Security Council's working methods. We were asked questions about their possible involvement in rationalizing the items on the Security Council agenda, revitalizing the working methods of the Security Council, and the review and decision-making processes related to items on the Security Council agenda.

Mindful of the calls of the general United Nations membership for enhanced cooperation, Bosnia and Herzegovina has raised the issue of further increasing the transparency of the Council's work and has suggested to the members of the Informal Working Group that they consider the idea of holding regular briefings on Security Council working methods for non-Council Member States. We are of the view that this exercise could be of common benefit. It could be a valuable opportunity for the Council to periodically

review progress in the implementation of certain measures, take into account the views of the general membership, and, if necessary, consider possible adequate adjustments.

Bearing in mind the primary responsibility of the Security Council for maintaining international peace and security, Bosnia and Herzegovina believes that the Security Council has achieved substantial progress in recent years regarding the improvement and openness of its working methods, as outlined in the presidential note 507. We reiterate our previously stated stance that the implementation of presidential note 507 should be based on the need to find a proper and adequate balance between generally accepted principles or guidelines on efficiency, transparency and interaction, on the one hand, and dialogue with non-members, on the other. In this regard, we welcome the continued engagement of the group of five small nations in making constructive and positive contributions to the improvement of the Council's working methods, both formally and informally.

Having been a member of the Council for almost two years now, we must acknowledge the importance of informal consultations to the decision-making process. Nevertheless, there must be more balance between the Council's informal consultations and the holding of public meetings. Moreover, we cannot neglect the importance of informal interaction with the wider membership, including informal interactive dialogue. This year, the Council has held four informal interactive dialogue meetings on Burundi, Darfur, Eritrea and Libya. We are of the view that such interaction is an added value to the Council's decision-making process, and has the potential to generate a sense of common ownership and strengthen the prospects for effective implementation.

We recognize the improvement made with regard to continued briefings and consultations by the Council with troop- and police-contributing countries as part of the efforts to implement peacekeeping mandates more effectively. We deem that there is room for the Security Council to enhance its interaction with other United Nations bodies, especially the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council. The main communication tool between the Council and the general membership is the Security Council's annual report, which we believe should comprise more analytical and substantial features.

When we speak about the transparency of the work of the Security Council, we imply not only interaction with non-Council members, but also increased transparency concerning the broader public, non-governmental organizations and the media. Bosnia and Herzegovina feels that the Arria Formula meeting is an adequate tool for engaging in a more informal dialogue with the United Nations membership, concerned countries, regional and subregional groups, experts, representatives of civil society, and the media.

Today, the United Nations Member States have another opportunity to reflect on the successful working methods of the Council, as well as on those practices where there is room for possible improvement. This exchange of experiences and perspectives can be useful in consolidating the Security Council's best practices for the common benefit.

Mr. Churkin (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We attach great importance to the convening of this open debate of the Security Council on the issue of its working methods. In our view, the very fact of conducting the meeting in this format bears witness to the improved transparency of the Council's work. Pursuant to the United Nations Charter, the Security Council is responsible for establishing its own rules of procedure, but we are prepared today to listen carefully to the views of our colleagues on how to make the Council's work more effective.

It is clear that the Council is the organ that bears the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security and is at the service of the international community as a whole. We wish nevertheless to note that, in the context of the discussion of working method reform, questions are often focused on broader topics, such as how successfully and appropriately the Council is implementing its Charter-mandated tasks. For instance, the Council is criticized for encroaching on the prerogatives of the other United Nations bodies. I note that we share this concern. Our colleagues on the Council are well aware that the Russian Federation has always soberly and selectively reacted to initiatives for the Council to consider thematic issues, particularly if they are generic in nature. We believe that the Council should focus on issues on which it can and must take concrete decisions.

We also understand the concern that the Council may too often resort to Chapter VII of the Charter,

including the application of sanctions. In that regard, we stress that the Russian Federation has consistently called on the Council to make more active use of the toolkit of preventive diplomacy and to invest in the development of mechanisms for the peaceful settlement of disputes. The provisions of Chapters VI and VIII should be fully exploited. Sanctions and the use of force to settle conflict are appropriate when all possibilities for peaceful settlement have been exhausted, the threat to international peace and security is clear, and the decision to resort to Chapter VII enjoys the broadest possible support of Council members.

An interesting and very relevant example is that we have recently seen inconsistent and broad interpretation of the decisions of the Security Council in situations where such decisions are supplemented or undermined by unilateral measures of pressure. We believe such activities to be unacceptable and to undermine the Council's authority. We stress the importance of this issue, but in our view it transcends the agenda item on the Council's working methods. Another set of provisions that bear no relation to the Council's working methods is that pertaining to the right of veto.

In order to make the Council even more effective and responsive to realities on the ground, we must work meticulously to improve its working methods. To that end, we established and operationalized the Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions. Although its activities are not public, it is working in organized, rational and constructive interaction with all interested delegations of Member States. It should be understood in that respect that proposals to enhance the transparency of the Council's activities should not undermine its effectiveness or its ability to respond promptly to situations. Dialogue on this important issue must be carried out in a balanced and professional manner, without politicization.

We feel that improving the quality of the Council's interaction with other United Nations bodies on issues within the Council's competence to be another key issue in improving the Councils working methods. One relevant task in that regard would be the future formulation of effective forms and methods for dialogue between the Council and the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council, other United Nations bodies, regional organizations and international partners. The practice of holding operational consultations between Council members and troop-and police-contributing countries must be maintained.

Much has been done recently to improve the Council's working methods. The number of open meetings on various issues has grown, and informal interactive dialogue and Arria Formula meetings have been held. One instrument of regular contact between the Council and interested non-members is the traditional briefing given by the Council presidency. Russia will assume the presidency tomorrow, and we invite all to a meeting, to be held on Friday, 2 December, at which I shall discuss the highlights of the Council's schedule for next month. I note that 178 Permanent Representatives have been invited to that meeting, but only eight attended the last such briefing.

Mr. Briens (France) (*spoke in French*): I would like, at the outset, to thank you, Mr. President, for having organized this debate on the Security Council's working methods. I also wish to thank the representative of Bosnia and Herzegovina for his introduction, as well as for his outstanding work as Chair of the Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions.

This debate should first be an opportunity to hear from Members of the Organization about the way in which the Security Council works. On our part, we consider the working methods to be a tool for the Council to work effectively. In that regard, I should like to make several comments.

My first comment has to do with the efforts that have been made to improve the Council's working methods. The 2010 revision of presidential note 507 (S/2010/507) on best practices clarified our working methods, for which we thank the delegation of Japan. Several points are worthy of mention. The presidency has a responsibility to provide all Members and officials of the Organization with the information they need with regard to the Council's work. It is therefore important to continue with the established practice of providing them the programme of work at the beginning of each month.

Most of the Council's meetings are held in public or entail a public part. Moreover, there are today more debates open to all delegations, which is a good thing. We believe that the public format should prevail when it comes to issues of general interest. Recently, we

should have heard from the High Commissioner for Human Rights here in the Chamber, rather than in consultations.

On the initiative of France and the United Kingdom, a regular dialogue has been established with troop contributors to peacekeeping operations. With the agreement of all delegations concerned, we should now make that dialogue more substantial. Another positive aspect is the fact that the President of the Council now meets regularly with the Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission, and that the Chairs of the country-specific configurations are invited to participate in the Council's meetings.

My second comment pertains to the fact that the Council has demonstrated its ability to adapt to new demands. The Council is the master of its agenda and its procedures, which are uncomplicated and allow for its practices to change with the needs. It is an asset for the Council to be able to adapt its work and functioning to new demands. Many examples point to the fact that it can do so. The Council meets more frequently to hold thematic debates, which make it possible for it to refine its approach to issues pertaining to international peace and security. To that end, it turns to the expertise of regional organizations and specialized international bodies, as well as to civil society in general. At the same time, we should implement the recommendation of the group of five small nations to strengthen the links between the Security Council's work on thematic issues — such as the rule of law, combating impunity, protecting civilians and new threats — and its efforts on specific situations.

Another example is the fact that the Council now has regular exchanges with the Department of Political Affairs on situations of risk that merit particular attention. In doing so, it is better able to anticipate and predict crises. It is important to pursue that effort and to bring in representatives of the Secretary-General on thematic issues, in particular when it comes to preventing war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide.

Lastly, today the Council has better follow-up of crisis situations and of the decisions it takes. In that connection, during its presidency in May, France organized a debate on the Democratic Republic of the Congo (see S/PV.6539) that brought together the main stakeholders as well as other Congolese officials. The meeting was preceded by a seminar with non-governmental organizations that made it possible to consolidate consensus on a complex issue. We believe that such an exercise, including broad agreement, could be useful and productive.

Finally, I would like to underscore the importance of continuing to innovate. In the course of the past month, the reality on the international stage has compelled the Council to take important decisions in difficult circumstances. It is also worth noting that, in spite of our political differences at times, cases of recourse to procedural points were the rare exception. That illustrates that the Security Council works well. We should therefore continue to innovate to take better decisions. To that end, various avenues could be pursued. First, missions to the field provide an opportunity for members of the Council to better understand the reality and to speak directly with local stakeholders. There should be a way to better define the goals for such missions in more operational terms.

Videoconferencing is now being used to communicate with United Nations missions on the ground. That makes it possible for the Council to be informed directly and in real time. It also allows United Nations officials to avoid having to make a trip to New York when it is important for them to be present in the field. The use of this tool could perhaps be made more systematic.

The Council has developed a new meeting format that allows it to better exchange views with Members of the United Nations on situations that concern them directly. In that regard, the interactive dialogue format is sufficiently flexible to respond to several categories of need. For instance, it made it possible to hold several meetings with Chadian officials before we withdrew the United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic and Chad. In principle, we support this type of exercise.

In conclusion, today we will hear many ideas for improving the Council's working methods. We encourage the Chair of the Informal Working Group on Documentation to compile the operational recommendations to be made.

Mr. Moungara Moussotsi (Gabon) (*spoke in French*): First of all, I would like to commend you, Mr. President, for your initiative to organize this debate on the Security Council's working methods. Clearly, this is one of the most important issues on our agenda.

I should also like to thank Ambassador Ivan Barbalić of Bosnia and Herzegovina for the competency with which he leads the Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions. Lastly, I would like to emphasize that the contribution of previous chairs of the Group, including Japan, should also be acknowledged.

The issue before us has to do with the very functioning of this body and, beyond that, with global governance itself, in particular when it comes to international peace and security. In order to grasp the full scope of the issue, it would be useful to consider the Council's working methods in the context of the letter and spirit of the Charter of the United Nations, which confers important responsibilities and competencies on the Security Council.

The work of the General Assembly Open-ended Working Group on the Question of Equitable Representation on and Increase in the Membership of the Security Council and Other Matters Related to the Security Council serves as a framework for the deliberations of Member States on the issue of the Council's working methods. Moreover, the Informal Working Group on Documentation has made it possible to consolidate the momentum on internal reform with a view to achieving greater transparency and participation in the Council's work for States that are not members of the Council.

Effectiveness in carrying out the Security Council's mission calls for establishing a more open and collegial relationship in the Council and between its members and the membership of the Organization as a whole.

My delegation welcomes the considerable progress that has been made over the years in improving the working methods of the Council. That progress reflects the Council's outstanding ability to adapt to the sweeping changes in our world with the emergence of new State and non-State actors on the international stage and the growing role of regional and subregional organizations in conflict resolution and peacekeeping.

I wish to make two observations in that respect. The first concerns the need for closer cooperation between the Council and regional and subregional organizations in the management of crises and armed conflicts. Sending timely high-level missions of Council members to countries facing unstable situations that could threaten international peace and security could be a powerful mechanism for crisis management and the prevention of armed conflict, assuming, of course, the full cooperation of the States in question and of subregional institutions. Such actions could be initiated either by the Council by direct recommendation of the Secretary-General, or by invitation of the Governments concerned. That would give greater visibility to the Security Council's role in crisis management well before such situations explode into violent armed conflicts that often require onerous peacekeeping operations.

My second remark concerns the need to increase the number of consultations between the Security Council and subregional organizations that play an active role in crisis resolution and the settlement of armed conflicts, such as the African Union, above all when the Council acts under Article VI of the Charter. That would enhance coordination with the relevant bodies of the African Union and guarantee more effective short-, medium- and long-term action with respect to lasting solutions to crises.

In that spirit, we call for greater interaction with troop-contributing countries, not only once a peacekeeping mission is under way, but from the earliest stage of its conception. The role of troop-contributing countries is therefore indispensable to assuring the success of peace missions authorized by the Council. It not only enables the Council to better respond to the wishes of a host country, but also guarantees closer adherence to the principle of good conduct by troops on the ground serving under United Nations mandate.

It would also be useful to encourage the regular exchange of information between the Security Council and other bodies of this Organization, in particular between the Council and the General Assembly and the Peacebuilding Commission. That would contribute to increasing transparency and confidence in the Council's actions.

Another important evolution in the Council's work can be seen in the thematic debates organized by the Council's rotating presidencies. Those debates, which are often open to the entire membership of our Organization, make a significant contribution to our consideration of the multiple challenges to international peace and security. It is nonetheless important to clearly define their focus so as not to

encroach on the competencies of each organ. Taken as a whole, such measures also highlight the importance of the Council acting with a degree of flexibility in order to make them more effective.

Before concluding, I would like briefly to emphasize the need for greater transparency in the process of negotiations on certain resolutions. All resolutions, along with many other documents, should be subject to a broad process of consultation well in advance of their submission for discussion. That would guarantee greater transparency and cohesion, as well as greater unity within the Council. Such an approach should also prevail in the designation of the leadership of the organs and subsidiary bodies of the Security Council.

Mr. Osorio (Colombia) (*spoke in Spanish*): I would like to thank you, Sir, for having convened this debate, which is of great interests to the entire membership of our Organization. I would also like to take this opportunity to recognize the preparatory work by the Permanent Representative of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Ambassador Ivan Barbalić, as Chairman of the Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Matters, a subsidiary body of the Council whose work is important to all Members. The Working Group has identified certain areas and issues that demand the Council's attention in order to achieve greater transparency, participation, efficiency and accountability in the Council's fulfilment of its responsibilities in the areas of international peacekeeping and security.

The Group's work is summarized in presidential note S/2010/507, whose adoption represented a significant step forward. Although we feel that it would be premature to undertake an evaluation of the process of implementing the guidelines for the practices contained in that important document, we believe that Council members should keep this issue under permanent review.

We stress the importance of the goal set forth in the note with respect to interaction and dialogue with non-member of the Council. The rigidity imposed by the traditional formats of Council meetings has been gradually overcome through the establishment of such practices as holding informal interactive dialogues in which members of this organ have benefited from the opportunity to make their views heard on a range of themes in direct exchange with intergovernmental organizations and with representatives of Governments of non-member countries. Aside from the question of the capacity in which Council members act in such meetings, the central point is that direct contact with such organizations and countries offers benefits that otherwise would be difficult to obtain. We wish to emphasize the role that new technologies should play in that process.

To those who maintain that the efforts required for the Council to consider matters of a general nature would unnecessarily dilute the Council's attention, when discussion of such matters more natural belongs in the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council or other United Nations organs, we believe that that is simply a way to rationalize the working methods of other organs.

An important development that contributes to improving transparency is the noticeable increase in the number of open debates held each month. The participation of non-members in such debates should contribute towards the same goal of airing different points of view and enriching the arguments available to Council members in adopting their decisions.

It may seem contradictory for open debates to be held in which presidential statements or resolutions that had been previously negotiated among Council members are adopted. A reasonable break should be allowed between an open debate and the negotiation and adoption of such documents to allow Council members to incorporate points of view that emerged in the debate. By the same token, it would be useful to reflect on possible formulas that would guarantee broad participation in those debates, as well as to ensure that statements are confined within rational limits and serve to convey a substantive conceptual contribution.

The same logic can be applied to meetings with troop-contributing countries, whose raison d'être should be to enrich the basic outcomes so that the Council adopts them and acts in the areas of peacekeeping operations in greatest need. If that exercise is to have greater significance, it is imperative for meetings to be scheduled sufficiently in advance and for the Secretariat produce an executive summary of the main points, from which Council members can extract elements to be included in or to enrich their decisions on renewing the mandates of ongoing peacekeeping operations.

The established practice of meeting with interested countries at the start or end of every month to enable the presidency to inform them about the provisional programme of work and discuss it is of great use and an important contribution to the transparency of the Council's work. My delegation believes it important to stress that the reports of the Secretary-General are key to matters under consideration by the Council. That should not prevent the Council from consulting other sources of information, so long as such sources are accurate, objective and verifiable.

Another positive development is the greater transparency that has been established with respect to the management of the procedures and selection criteria that have been established to decide on the inclusion of persons, groups, organizations or entities on the lists related to terrorism as well as their exclusion. We welcome the decision to establish the Ombudsman Office as an independent and impartial body charged with reviewing such lists in order to ensure that the Council's actions take matters of due process into account.

In conclusion, I should like to say that my delegation shares the views of those speakers who stated that any debate on the methods of work of the Council should focus on matters such as transparency, interaction with non-members and the efficiency of the Council's work. We stand ready to listen closely to the points of view of all delegations that have requested to speak during today's debate.

Mr. Amieyeofori (Nigeria): Mr. President, allow me to convey our appreciation to you for having convened this timely debate on the working methods of the Security Council. We also appreciate the precise concept paper (S/2011/726) circulated by your delegation in advance of this discussion.

Reforming the working methods of the Security Council remains a matter of urgency given the decisive role that the Council plays in the affairs of Member States. It is therefore encouraging that the Security Council has done much work recently to improve the efficiency and transparency of its work as well as its interaction and dialogue with non-members of the Council. Just last year, the Council adopted a revised presidential note (S/2010/507) that reinforced its intention to enhance dialogue with troop-contributing countries and the use of informal dialogue. Undoubtedly, the activities of the Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions, under the able leadership of Ambassador Ivan Barbalić, have also helped to reinforce this improvement.

The Council should not, however, rest on its laurels. Much work could still be done to enhance efficiency and transparency, thus engendering greater confidence on the part of the broader United Nations membership and global public. There is no doubt that a continued improvement in the content and narrative quality of the Council's annual report is necessary if we are to meet the expectations of non-members of the Council.

Here we commend the efforts of the German delegation in preparing the annual report for 2010/2011 (A/66/2), particularly for continuing with the practice of consultation with non-members of the Council. We would recall that the important suggestions received from non-members of the Council greatly enriched our work in preparing the report for 2009/2010 (A/65/2). This practice should be sustained and improved upon.

To improve on the information available to the broader United Nations membership, the respective Presidents of the Council should speak more often to the media, and lead countries should provide more information to the public. The Presidents of the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and the Security Council will need to sustain their regular discussions in order to improve complementarity in the work of those organs. In addition, the Chairs of subsidiary bodies should be encouraged to hold periodic briefings on their activities and schedule more spontaneous and productive sessions with non-Council members. Adequate and timely information on their activities will be useful to the wider United Nations membership.

Nigeria welcomes the efforts made to improve interaction with troop- and police-contributing countries and regional organizations. As a major troop-contributing country, we see great value in enhancing interaction with troop-contributing countries as well as the Peacebuilding Commission. This is imperative during implementation, change in, renewal of, or completion of mandates, or when there has been a rapid deterioration of the situation on the ground. The proper sequencing of such meetings is crucial if we are to achieve meaningful results. It is also essential to

invite the countries and parties concerned to the deliberations of the Council to share local perspectives and specialized knowledge relating to issues on the Council's agenda. That principle informed our commitment to greater and more frequent involvement of the troop-contributing countries in the activities of the Council's Working Group on Peacekeeping Operations, chaired by Nigeria.

The Security Council's field missions have been useful in providing an adequate impression of local realities. Council discussions have also been enriched through dialogue with various actors at the national and regional levels. As a nation from the continent accounting for about 70 per cent of the issues on the Council's agenda, we see such missions as very useful and productive. It may be helpful to prolong the duration of such visits so as to provide ample time for engagement with local and regional actors.

The Council's working methods offer the tools necessary to ensure efficiency and transparency in its work. We are under no illusion that the tools are sufficient to address all challenges. The right mix of these tools and flexibility will help to underpin the Council's efforts, pursuant to presidential note S/2010/507. It is also important to continuously identify gaps and make the required changes.

Our discussion today, under the Portuguese presidency, represents such an effort. In that context, we must not lose sight of the need to improve the Council's effectiveness in preventing conflicts. The Council's commitment to Chapters VI and VIII of the Charter of the United Nations and preventive diplomatic strategies will greatly contribute to the maintenance of international peace and security.

Mr. Wittig (Germany): Mr. President, I, too, should like to thank you for having initiated today's open debate. It provides a good opportunity to reflect on what has been achieved so far and where improvements could be made.

Much has been achieved. Discussions at this year's retreat for the incoming newly elected members were also dedicated to ideas and suggestions on how to improve the work of the Council and make it more transparent and efficient.

The regular briefings by the Department of Political Affairs are an important improvement, particularly in the context of the Arab Spring. These briefings have allowed for discussions on matters of international peace and security that have not yet become formal agenda items. They also allow the Council to be more flexible and responsive to evolving situations on the ground, contributing also to a stronger preventive role of the Council.

Among the Council's subsidiary bodies, the sanctions committees have become a major field of activity for the Council and its members. Here, too, the working methods have become more efficient and transparent over the past years. The establishment of a focal point for delisting, and, in the case of the Security Council Committee pursuant to resolutions 1267 (1999) and 1989 (2011) concerning Al-Qaida and associated individuals and entities, of an Ombudsperson in particular are important innovations with direct benefit for the wider United Nations membership.

There is also some discussion on the selection procedure and the accountability of the expert panels established to support the sanctions committees in their work. While a discussion on this issue may be warranted, it is our view that this should neither result in excessively delaying the beginning of the work of new experts, nor lead to any infringement on the independence of such experts in the implementation of their mandate. It is precisely their independence, combined with their expert knowledge, that provides the added benefit not only to the Security Council but also to the wider United Nations membership. We thus are strongly in favour of their reports, as a general rule, being made public.

An open and transparent relationship between the Security Council and the wider United Nations membership remains crucial for the political acceptance and relevance of the Council, as well as for the implementation of its resolutions. As President of the Security Council for the month of July 2011, Germany drafted the introduction of the annual report of the Security Council to the General Assembly (A/66/2). In preparing for the compilation of the report, we built on the good practice of holding, together with Nigeria and Portugal, an informal meeting with the wider United Nations membership. We also asked the presidency to separate the debates on the annual report and on the issue of Security Council reform in order to allow for a more focused debate on both issues. These are but two examples of how the Council can better satisfy the legitimate interests of the broader

membership in enhanced transparency and accessibility of the Council in its work.

We fully agree with the goal expressed in your concept paper, Mr. President, preparing for today's debate, of improving involvement by all stakeholders such as concerned non-members of the Council and relevant regional organizations. Concrete steps could include more frequent use of the Arria-formula meetings or giving troop contributors and other stakeholders the opportunity for joint input in Council consultations. We also share the goal of enhancing the role of the Military Staff Committee. We appreciate the current practice of regular informal meetings of the Committee open to all 15 members of the Council, and encourage its continuation.

The relationship between the Security Council and the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) has become more interactive and dynamic. The chairpersons of the PBC country-specific configurations now regularly brief the Council when a particular country's situation is under consideration. They bring to the table a different perspective that can complement the Council's assessment of a given situation. In this context, their participation in Council consultations should also be envisaged. There is also still potential for improvement in ensuring that the Council can and will draw on the PBC's advice on broader peacebuilding perspectives.

Important progress has been made in enhancing the relationship between the Security Council and thematic Special Representatives of the Secretary-General, such as those for children and armed conflict and sexual violence in conflict. Similarly, the briefings provided by the Executive Director of UN-Women and representatives of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights have been important to the Council's work. In our view, the Council has greatly benefited from their analyses and reports. The same holds true for the briefings provided by the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court. Germany supports regular participation by these Offices in briefings and at consultations of the Security Council.

We also believe that the Council should be more open to an enhanced relationship with the Human Rights Council, not least because of the role that the independent commissions of inquiry established by the Human Rights Council play in several situations on the Security Council's agenda.

Lastly, we welcome the initiative of Member States in presenting concrete proposals for reform of the working methods of the Security Council. As I mentioned before, we support many of the ideas contained in the initiative proposed by the so-called group of five small nations. However, Germany strongly supports improvement of the Council's working methods as part of a comprehensive reform of the Council. Focusing only on its working methods resembles a band-aid approach to a more structural issue that, in our view, can be addressed only by making the membership of the Council more representative of the world we live in today.

Mr. Salam (Lebanon) (*spoke in Arabic*): We commend you, Mr. President, for holding this open debate to consider and assess the working methods of the Security Council, the organ primarily responsible for the maintenance of international peace and security. That is the reason for the particular significance of the working methods the Council uses to carry out its duties and responsibilities, and their ability to help it improve its efficiency in view of its increasing workload and the growing number of peacekeeping operations and political missions. I should like to commend the role played in this by the delegation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, especially its Permanent Representative Ambassador Barbalić, and the important follow-up undertaken by the group of five small nations and the proposals they have submitted.

The Security Council's working methods have evolved considerably in the past few years. We are pleased to note the action it has taken to increase transparency and interaction between Council members and non-members, and we would like to see more of this approach. Improving the Council's working methods, in our view, should be a means to enhance its effectiveness in implementing its resolutions without selectivity or bias, pending the comprehensive reform that we all desire and that should, of course, include the issue of membership. The issue of the right of veto and the way it is exercised should also be revisited.

We stress the importance of increasing the number of open debates and reducing the number of closed meetings, which would enable the Council to listen to and interact with non-members' proposals and ideas, and add to the transparency of its work. We do recognize, however, the need to strike a balance between transparency and efficiency in order to ensure that such meetings are productive and non-routine. We

also welcome the coordinating meetings that the Council holds with troop- and police-contributing countries, which are among the instruments that enable the Council to implement its policies. Such interaction should be strengthened so as to include host countries.

In accordance with Chapter VIII of the Charter, it is essential that we increase cooperation between the Council and regional organizations, especially on matters concerning international peace and security. We also call for strengthened interaction between the Security Council and the heads of other United Nations organs, particularly the Presidents of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council and the Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission.

We also believe that the Security Council's annual reports and the monthly reports prepared by the rotating presidencies should include more detailed analysis useful to non-members of the Council. The monthly informational briefings that the President of the Council holds for non-member States are a beneficial practice, while informing the media as to the basic thrust of closed consultations also enables other Member States to follow the Council's activities.

Finally, we support the view of the Council's Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions that its processes must be more focused and flexible. In this context, documents should be prepared in all six official languages in a timely manner, which is an important step towards strengthening transparency.

In conclusion, I am grateful to the President for the concept note (see S/2011/726, annex) prepared by the Portuguese delegation for this debate.

Mr. Mashabane (South Africa): I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for convening this important debate and for preparing the concept note on the Security Council's working methods (see S/2011/726, annex).

My delegation aligns itself with the statement to be delivered by the representative of Egypt on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

We welcome the improvements in the implementation of the July 2006 note by the President of the Council (S/2006/507) and the overall progress that has been made in improving the working methods of the Security Council. We acknowledge that the implementation of the note is an important contribution to enhancing the efficiency and transparency of the Council's work.

A welcome development has been the significant improvement the Council has shown in increasing the number of its public meetings, and the greater frequency of public briefings by special envoys and representatives. We also commend the increased interaction between the President of the Council and the general United Nations membership. While these measures are modest, they are nonetheless important steps towards improving the Council's work and ensuring greater transparency and accountability.

More, however, must be done to ensure that such developments translate into substantive and meaningful engagement between the Security Council and the general membership, and that the views of the latter are reflected in the Council's actions. My delegation also welcomes the increased interaction between the President of the Council and the Presidents of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council.

There is growing recognition of the linkage between peacekeeping and peacebuilding. The Council, in our view, has thus gained from its increased interaction with the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC). This interaction should, however, translate into a reflection of the views of the PBC in the Council's consideration of peacekeeping mandates. Similarly, interaction with troop-contributing countries has increased and meetings have been scheduled well in advance of Council meetings. My delegation has also appreciated hearing the views of force commanders in their briefings to the Council during the year. A further challenge is ensuring that these measures are implemented and made permanent. In that regard, we support the call for formalizing the Council's rules of procedure in order to improve its transparency and accountability.

There has been some progress in enhancing and strengthening the partnership between the United Nations Security Council and the Peace and Security Council of the African Union (AU). Nonetheless, challenges still exist in achieving the desired complementarity in the areas of conflict prevention, management and resolution between the United Nations and the African Union. We are of the view that the President of the Security Council could interact regularly with the President of the African Union Peace

and Security Council on issues that are on the agendas of both Councils. The two Councils could further benefit from more interaction and substantive discussion on a regular basis. In that regard, the use of video technology could be successfully deployed to regularize such interactions between the United Nations Security Council and the AU Peace and Security Council.

In conclusion, we are of the view that minor changes to the working methods will not necessary address the more fundamental issue that affects the legitimacy and credibility of the Council, which is linked to the fact that the current configuration of the Council is unrepresentative, in particular in the permanent category. We think that we must therefore speed up the process of reform of the Council to make it more representative.

Mr. Hardeep Singh Puri (India): The Security Council is mandated by the United Nations Charter with the primary responsibility for maintenance of international peace and security, including by coercive action. What it does and the manner in which it goes about doing its work are, however, of interest to the entire international community. The Council's work as well as its working methods thus become of importance for us all.

I would like to place on record, Mr. President, my delegation's deep appreciation that you and your delegation have organized this open debate on the working methods of the Security Council, despite a clear lack of enthusiasm on the part of some members of the Council, who openly state that the issue of the Council's working methods is the exclusive preserve of its permanent members. I also want to take this opportunity to express our appreciation for the efforts of our colleague from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Ivan Barbalić, for chairing the Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions.

I also want to align myself with the statement that is to be made by my colleague from Egypt on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

The Security Council's composition — rooted in the situation obtaining in 1945 — and its working methods are both divorced from the contemporary reality of international relations. Its non-transparent rules of procedures remain "provisional", even after the Council's existence for six and a half decades. The Council's reluctance to consult with those affected by its decisions, its refusal to harness the capabilities of the wider United Nations membership and its all too evident eagerness to apply methods of coercion under Chapter VII, to the neglect of provisions under Chapters VI and VIII, are not only anachronistic, but, as experience has shown on a day-to-day basis, also counter-productive. They also detract from the Council's effectiveness and efficiency in the implementation of its mandate to ensure international peace and security. Despite all of that, the Council is ever more eager to encroach on the Charter-mandated role of other United Nations organs.

The time has come, therefore, for the Council to seriously consider why many of its decisions are not having their intended effect; why a large number of Member States are not able or willing to respond to its numerous requests for national reports on implementation of its coercive decisions; why it has to resort so often to coercive measures under Chapter VII; why it does not command enough trust and respect from the international community — or even confidence in itself — to mandate measures under Chapter VI; why it fails to take recourse to cooperation with regional organizations under Chapter VIII to solve regional problems; and, most important of all, how the Council can address its failures and increase its effectiveness and efficiency.

Let me share an Indian perspective on how the Security Council could better its performance. First, the permanent members of the Security Council must recognize, not only individually but also collectively, that the Council must be reformed to make it reflect the contemporary realities of the international system. Secondly, the international community as a whole must be cognizant that enlarging the Security Council to reflect contemporary geopolitical realities would improve its representative character. It would also increase the representation of developing countries — which comprise the vast majority of the United Nations membership — who are ready, capable and willing to shoulder responsibility and contribute through all required means to the maintenance of international peace and security. Thirdly, there is need for real improvement in the Council's working methods to enhance its legitimacy, effectiveness and efficiency. Cosmetic changes will not help. Real improvements demand change in both process and approach, which requires reform of the composition of the Council.

Insofar as the working methods of the Security Council are concerned, the first and foremost necessity is to make them transparent. Access to documentation and information is an issue of particular concern. The tendency of the Security Council to hold closed meetings that have no records should also be curbed.

We then have the issue of "pen holders". Quite apart from the fact that it takes quite a while to understand what the concept of a pen holder is and which member is holding which pen for which issue, it is difficult to understand why pen holding should basically be a monopoly of permanent members, with concentration in even fewer fingers.

The quality of briefings that we receive often gives rise to questions of their being skewed and not really neutral, objective and based on observed facts. I also find it strange that reporting of the Council's proceedings tends to be judgmental. For example, on both occasions during our term on the Council when vetoes were exercised, the Department of Public Information reports used the expression "failed to adopt" to describe what transpired.

Based on our experience during the past 11 months, I would like to suggest some specific points for consideration. First, the Council should amend its procedures so that items do not remain on its agenda permanently. There are matters that have been discussed for decades. In such cases, further attention should require that some valid reasons be proffered by those seeking retention of those items on the agenda. Second, the Council's consideration of issues should be rationalized, so that issues do not come for consideration so often and routinely as to bog down the limited time that the Council has at its disposal.

Third, Articles 31 and 32 of the Charter must be fully implemented, by consulting with non-Security Council members on a regular basis, especially Members with a special interest in the substantive matter under consideration by the Council. Fourth, non-members must be given systematic access to subordinate organs of the Security Council, including the right to participate. Fifth, the participation of troop- and police-contributing countries in decision-making about peacekeeping operations must extend to the establishment, conduct, review and termination of peacekeeping operations, including the extension and change of mandates and specific operational issues.

Sixth, countries having a specific interest in a particular agenda item must be consulted before an outcome document on that item is adopted. Seventh, the Council should concentrate its time and efforts on dealing with issues concerning its primary responsibility for international peace and security as mandated by the Charter, rather than encroaching on the mandate of the General Assembly. Eighth, before mandating measures under Chapter VII of the Charter, the Council should first make serious efforts at pacific settlement of disputes through measures under Chapter VI. In that connection, the Council must also improve its cooperation with regional organizations, particularly with the African Union, since a large volume of the Council's work concerns the African continent. Such cooperation must be serious and include providing assistance to the African Union in its capacity-building efforts as per their requirement and not just when it is convenient or fashionable.

In conclusion, let me reiterate the considered view of my delegation that genuine reform in the working methods of the Council really requires a comprehensive reform in the membership of the Council, with expansion in both permanent and non-permanent categories and improvement in its working procedures. This is essential for both the credibility and the continued confidence of the international community in this institution.

Mr. Yang Tao (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): I would like to thank the Portuguese presidency for the initiative to hold this open debate on the working methods of the Security Council. It will not only help Council members to engage in in-depth consideration and discussion of the working methods but will also help them to hear the opinions of others, particularly those of the developing countries, which make up the majority of the United Nations membership. We have listened carefully to previous speakers, including the representative of Bosnia and Herzegovina. We wish to express our appreciation to Bosnia and Herzegovina for its contribution as Chair of the Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions.

In recent years the Security Council has held several open debates on its working methods. China has always valued and supported improving the working methods of the Council so as to enhance its transparency and efficiency so that it can better carry out its work in accordance with the United Nations

Charter and the Council's provisional rules of procedure and to better implement its primary Charter-mandated responsibility of maintaining international peace and security.

The Security Council has made many efforts to improve its working methods, including, among others, using the format of public meetings as much as possible and the regular briefings for non-members of the Council by the rotating Council presidency on the monthly schedule of work. Innovative methods such as informal interactive dialogue have given Council members opportunities to exchange opinions with regard to sensitive situations on the Council's agenda with countries involved. The Council has also improved its annual report submitted to the General Assembly.

On the other hand, there is still room for improvement of the Council's working methods. The 2010 note by the President of the Security Council (S/2010/507) should therefore be further implemented.

The Security Council and various other United Nations organs should carry out their work in accordance with the division of labour, their comparative advantages and the demands of the United Nations Charter in an integrated and coordinated manner that results in synergy instead of duplication of efforts, controversy and waste of resources. The Security Council, the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council should maintain communication through their Presidents.

China supports the Security Council providing to countries involved in situations on the Council's agenda more opportunities to present their positions and opinions. We also hope that mechanisms such as the Working Group on Peacekeeping Operations and the meetings of the troop-contributing countries (TCCs) will be better used to strengthen interaction among the Security Council, the TCCs and the Secretariat in carrying out preventive diplomacy and in the peaceful resolution of conflicts. The Council should encourage and support regional organizations such as the African Union and the League of Arab States and hear their opinions better before making a decision.

Sir Mark Lyall Grant (United Kingdom): I would like to begin by thanking Portugal for calling for today's debate. Ensuring that the Security Council adopts the most efficient working methods is essential to the continuing effectiveness of this body. The Council has a responsibility to ensure that it is equipped to deal with all matters of international peace and security as effectively as possible. The United Kingdom treats this obligation seriously and fully supports the ongoing process to seek out new ways to improve efficiency, transparency and effectiveness.

The United Kingdom has made some important contributions to this process over the last year, in particular those aimed at strengthening its focus on conflict prevention. I am pleased that we have helped to embed the horizon-scanning sessions into the Council's programme of work as a regular item. The United Kingdom has promoted more informal sessions to stimulate debate on various challenges facing the United Nations, particularly around peacekeeping.

We have also made more use during our presidency of video technology to get real-time updates from the various front lines where the United Nations operates. We are pleased that that has now become standard practice. Several special representatives have themselves commented to us that they welcome the fact that they can now keep the Council informed and updated without having to take days out of their schedule to travel to New York. We are also encouraging more opportunities for the Council to hear expert and specialized advice, for instance from the Peacebuilding Commission and the Military Staff Committee.

We should continue to support those practices and find new ways in which to evolve and adapt. If we see something that does not work as well as it could, we should not be afraid of addressing it. And if we see an opportunity to make a positive change to how we work, we should consider how best to embrace it. We should continue, for instance, to welcome more ways to increase the transparency of the Council, provided that this is balanced against the need for it to work effectively. We support more open sessions with different formats, such as Arria-style, or informal, briefings if that helps to increase understanding, awareness and debate.

The Council should always be on the lookout to find new ways of opening up its work to non-members. We should also be ready to fully use existing opportunities to demonstrate the openness and transparency of our operations. We very much regret, for example, the fact that the position of some Council

members prevents the wider circulation of reports from panels of experts working for the Council's subsidiary bodies. Experts' reports should be published as a matter of course.

Equally, however, we should be clear that many discussions must be held without record, behind closed doors, among the 15 members of the Council. To suggest otherwise is not serious.

The Security Council's dialogue with regional bodies needs to continue and to become more strategic. Regional organizations can bring added value to the Council's deliberations with local knowledge and expertise, as has been shown this year in the Council's interactions with the Arab League and the African Union.

It is also important that the Council is flexible when considering how new technology can aid our work. Social media networks have played a significant role in some of the momentous events in the Middle East in the past year, including in Libya, Egypt and Syria. These networks spread news, pictures and ideas directly into society at a speed unimaginable even just a few years ago. The situations develop quite literally before our eyes, and the Council needs to consider how that affects our ability to stay on the front foot. Ensuring a robust online digital presence, including by supporting live broadcasts of Council meetings on the Internet, is part of the answer. Using videoconference technology more regularly to get on-the-ground assessments also helps in this regard.

But we must all be ready to accept that the Council may need to address issues more quickly and act faster. Twenty-four-hour news coverage, social media networks and the ubiquity of mobile telephones mean that "wait and see" will become a less and less acceptable position if the Security Council is to remain at the forefront of international efforts to maintain peace and security. This is an ongoing process. The Security Council needs to be prepared to evolve continually if it is to operate as effectively and transparently as possible.

In closing, I would like to reaffirm the United Kingdom's commitment to participate in this important process.

Mrs. Viotti (Brazil): I thank you, Mr. President, for convening this important open debate on working methods of the Security Council. Brazil has long been supportive of improvements in working methods that make the Council more transparent, inclusive and accessible. As a Council member, we have remained attentive and responsive to the needs and interests of the wider membership.

Brazil supported and welcomed the adoption last year of the revised presidential note 507 (S/2010/507), in particular the intention expressed by members to maintain regular interaction with the Peacebuilding Commission and to enhance dialogue with troop-contributing countries, the reference to the increasing use of informal interactive dialogue by the Council in recent years, and the new section on planning and reporting for Security Council missions. Under the chairmanship of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions has been looking into ways to enhance the Council's transparency, accountability and efficiency. Such efforts can greatly benefit from further interaction and dialogue with the wider membership.

Last February, during our presidency of the Security Council, Brazil made a conscious effort to involve every member of the Council in its deliberations and keep them constantly informed of developments, so as to help build unity of purpose. We also sought to keep in close contact with all parties directly concerned with the issues of which the Council was seized.

At the end of the month, Brazil organized a briefing for non-members of the Council to exchange views on issues covered during the month, the first of that kind since 2005.

It is essential that non-members have the opportunity to be heard and have their views duly taken into account and, therefore, to legitimately influence the decisions especially relevant to them. The more the Security Council moves in that direction, the more it will observe the letter and spirit of the Charter. Enhancing the Council's outreach to non-members will greatly contribute to strengthening its credibility and increase the effectiveness of its decisions, especially concerning the implementation of resolutions by all Member States.

As suggested in the concept note (S/2011/726, annex), I would like to point out some concrete measures designed to further improve the working methods of the Security Council.

We fully agree that the Council should strengthen the trend of meeting more often in public. In fact, it should meet in public as a general rule, without prejudice to the usefulness of consultations of the whole in preparing Council decisions. Private meetings should be reserved for exceptional circumstances. Even some traditionally private meetings could be turned into public sessions. A clear example is the annual briefing by the President of the International Court of Justice. As suggested by the President of the Court, the interaction between the Council and the Court should be more frequent. Both organs stand to benefit from a more regular exchange of information on the work being carried out, without prejudice to their independence and the specific nature of each body.

On the relationship between the Security Council and the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC), more should be done to make full use of the advisory role of the Commission. The Chairs of the PBC country-specific configurations should be invited to participate in relevant consultations as often as possible.

We also believe that it would be useful for the functioning of the Council and its overall legitimacy if it adopted the practice of consulting with non-members on a regular basis, especially members with a special interest in the substantive matter under consideration by the Security Council and holding frequent, timely and qualitative briefings for non-members, even granting non-members access to the subsidiary bodies of the Council, including the right to participate, as appropriate.

In regard to accountability, I would like to highlight the importance of enhanced procedures that could help to monitor and assess the manner in which the resolutions adopted by the Council are interpreted and implemented, in particular those that authorize the use of force. Brazil raised that point during the open debate on the protection of civilians in armed conflict earlier this month (see S/PV.6650). When the use of force is authorized by the Council, the Member States or organizations entrusted with that responsibility are accountable to the Council and to the broader membership. We believe that an in-depth discussion on objective parameters is needed in order to ensure such accountability. There is a need to enhance the Council's procedures so as to ensure that the implementation of resolutions involving the use of force does not raise doubts regarding the objectives of the action to be taken. The way in which resolutions are implemented should be a matter for consideration by the Council itself.

In that context, reports on military operations should be required and should include such parameters as proportionality and the fit between the measures taken and the goals to be achieved. We invite Member States to further reflect on and discuss the benefit of specific mechanisms to follow up on the implementation of mandates, for the purposes of monitoring and assessment and reporting to the Security Council during the course of military action so that the duties of accountability are fulfilled.

To conclude, Mr. President, it must be noted that some of the shortcomings in the Security Council's working methods cannot be entirely corrected without real reform, including changes in the Council's current power structure. In order for the Council to be aligned with the current political realities, it should be enlarged in the permanent and non-permanent categories of membership, with increased representation of developing countries in both. We remain convinced that such comprehensive reform would enable the Council to make a fresh start and would ultimately give rise to new and improved dynamics in its daily work.

May I stress that Brazil will continue to work — inside and outside the Security Council — towards effective improvements in its working methods, with a view to making the Council more transparent, inclusive and accessible.

Ms. DiCarlo (United States of America): The United States appreciates the commitment of Portugal to improving the working methods of the Security Council, as shown by your initiative, Mr. President, in convening this fourth open debate on the topic.

Additionally, we recognize Ambassador Ivan Barbalić of Bosnia and Herzegovina for his work as Chair of the Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions, and the excellent management of those issues by the Bosnian Mission.

Our discussions of the working methods of the Council are important in order to ensure that the Council remains able to address the challenges of the twenty-first century. Acting on behalf of the membership of the United Nations, the Council bears the primary responsibility for maintaining international peace and security. It is essential that, in carrying out

this role, its work be as effective, efficient and transparent as possible. Article 30 of the Charter mandates the Council to adopt its own rules of procedure. In doing so, the Council recognizes the need for other United Nations Members who are our partners in the maintenance of international peace and security to be informed of and appropriately involved in the work of the Council.

To that end, the Council some years ago revitalized its Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions. Our discussion today builds upon the Group's extensive work and the recommendations outlined in the annex to note by the President of the Security Council contained in document S/2006/507. In that regard, we would like, once again, to thank Japan for its efforts to develop updates to that note.

We should bear in mind the steps taken thus far by the Council to implement those recommendations. With respect to transparency, Council Presidents brief non-Council members shortly after the adoption of the programme of work each month. Each Council President further prepares a published assessment of its month-long term, thereby expanding the information available to all Member States on the problems facing the Council and how those problems have been addressed.

The Council has increased its interaction with non-Council members by holding open debates and informal discussions. We are encouraged by the growing number of Member States that choose to participate in open meetings, such as today's, and look forward to subsequent open sessions on a range of issues that are relevant to the Council's agenda.

The Council has further welcomed the Chairs of the various country-specific configurations of the Peacebuilding Commission, inviting them to participate in Council deliberations. The subsidiary bodies of the Council, such as the Counter-Terrorism Committee, have held more open meetings, and sanctions committee Chairs have organized more open briefings for the broader United Nations membership to discuss sanctions regime objectives and committee activities. Sanctions committees have also invited representatives of Member States to brief them on issues of mutual concern, and we encourage interested Member States to pursue such opportunities.

Troop-contributing countries play a critical role in the development of peacekeeping operations. The Council has sought to increase the role that troop-contributing countries play in discussions of the mandates of missions to which they contribute. To highlight the importance that the United States assigns to troop-contributing countries, President Obama met with top contributors in September 2009 to hear their perspective on ways to improve United Nations peacekeeping.

The Council has also increased its interaction with non-Council members through informal processes, such as groups of friends. The Group of Friends of Women, Peace and Security, for instance, informs the Council's actions through inclusive and transparent dialogue between Council and non-Council members.

Making the work of the Council more efficient requires constant effort. In that regard, we all face the challenge of balancing the substance with the length of our remarks. All of us, Council members and non-Council members alike, should aim to convey our message succinctly, so that as many Member States as possible can speak with the many other States that are present to hear them.

Today's debate offers members the opportunity to share views on whether the practical applications of the innovations listed in the 507 note have helped them to better follow and participate in the Council's work. The United States welcomes constructive comments that will inform future efforts of the Working Group and allow it to assess the effectiveness of measures to enhance transparency, dialogue and efficiency. We look forward to continued discussions on those issues and thank the Portuguese presidency once again for this initiative.

The President: I wish to remind all speakers to limit their statements to no more than four minutes in order to enable the Council to carry out its work expeditiously. Delegations with lengthy statements are kindly requested to circulate the texts in writing and to deliver a condensed version when speaking in the Chamber.

(*spoke in Spanish*): I give the floor to the representative of Guatemala.

Mr. Rosenthal (Guatemala) (*spoke in Spanish*): Allow us to thank you, Mr. President, for convening

this open debate on the working methods of the Security Council and for the lucid concept note that has been circulated. We hope that this debate will renew our commitment to making further progress in improving the efficiency and transparency of the Security Council.

Our delegation associates itself fully with the statement to be made by the representative of Egypt, who will speak on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement, and we also support the statement to be made by, and the proposals to be submitted by, the group of five small nations (S-5), with which we traditionally identify ourselves. From a national perspective, we will make just a few brief comments.

We take this opportunity to recognize the significant advances and improvements in some practices and new measures, which were reflected in the 507 note. Along those lines, the unusual detail provided in the report of the Security Council for the period 1 August 2010 to 31 July 2011 (A/66/2), especially in its introduction highlighting some of that progress, is commendable. However, we think that there is still ample room for improvements. In that regard, we would like to highlight some of the practices that we feel should be improved or implemented more consistently.

First, we attach importance to the interaction with the broader membership through briefings, not only at the beginning of each presidency, but also at the conclusion thereof. It seems a very timely and useful practice, which we see as a voluntary exercise in accountability. We recognize, in that regard, the initiative taken by Brazil, which has, unfortunately, not been replicated by other members of the Council.

Secondly, we believe it is important to continue improving the interaction between the Chairs of the Committees and Working Groups and all Member States. In particular, it seems necessary to us to develop a mechanism of interaction with those member States that will assume the chairmanships, especially with those entering for the first time as members of the Council, and to allow them, if not the opportunity to express their preferences, at least the possibility of better preparing for the role and work being assigned to them.

Thirdly, we also consider it appropriate to emphasize the importance of the interaction between Council members and their respective regional groups. I refer specifically to our experience in the Latin American and Caribbean Group, where we consistently receive a monthly report of the activities of the Council during the course of each month. I take this opportunity to thank the delegations of Brazil and Colombia, which have kept us constantly informed this year. Of course, we would like to see the reports become more candid, especially because they are often restricted to an account of the meetings and decisions adopted by the Council without going into detail as to the most interesting aspects of why one or another action was adopted by the Council.

A fourth and final aspect that we would like to highlight is that of the rationalization of the programme of work. We are pleased to see the progress in the disclosure of the programme of work and its availability. However, we consider it possible to improve on the Council's allocation of time to its routine work, allowing greater availability for conflict prevention and resolution. Along those lines, the rationalization of the Council's agenda is also still a work in progress; despite the progress made in establishing a procedure for the elimination of items, there have been few concrete results.

The President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to the representative of Switzerland.

Mr. Seger (Switzerland) (spoke in French): Mr. President, in my personal capacity, I would like to express my pleasure in seeing you preside over the Security Council and also in seeing someone wearing a bowtie as President of the Council.

I have the honour of speaking on behalf of the group of five small nations (S-5), comprising Costa Rica, Jordan, Liechtenstein, Singapore and Switzerland, and I would like to thank Portugal, not only for the timely organization of the fourth debate on this important matter, but also for Portugal's overall commitment to this relevant topic, namely, the working methods of the Security Council. The S 5 appreciates this opportunity to engage in a dialogue with the Council, as we believe that decisions on behalf of the membership of the United Nations are more effective when they are taken in a transparent, inclusive and accountable manner.

Let us imagine for a moment that we were sitting here some decades ago, for example in 1950, discussing action during the war on the Korean peninsula, or in 1960, sending the first peacekeepers to

the Congo, or in 1966, taking decisions on the first set of binding sanctions against Rhodesia. Let us try to imagine not only how differently the world was shaped at that time and how differently Council members may have been interacting, but in particular how radically different the way of working must have been back in the 1950s and 1960s. At that time, as was noted by the representative of the United Kingdom, there were no computers, no mobile telephones, no rapid reporting by our embassies during a given crisis. Nor did we receive media alerts or images from a remote part of the world after a massacre had been committed. Our predecessors had to make strenuous efforts to find reliable information and await instructions from capitals by cable before they could use their room for negotiations.

I assume no one in this room would deny that technological progress has had a huge impact on our working methods. The new proximity, interconnectivity and extremely fast flow of information in and out of this Chamber have, on the one hand, increased pressure on the Council, pushing it to take rapid, legitimate and effective actions, and, on the other, increased the stakes in handling information responsibly.

In addition, the Council has become increasingly more active over the decades. There have never been so many sanction regimes, United Nations operations in the field or other Council mechanisms as there are today. Our predecessors had fewer items on their agenda to monitor or Council decisions to implement.

It was therefore easier to track the Council's work, whether as a member or as a non-member of the Council. Therefore, while the main tasks of the Security Council as set forth in the United Nations Charter under Articles 1 and 24 have remained the same, the ways of performing those tasks and the consequences of a given decision have dramatically changed.

The Council is still working either under the provisional rules of procedure prepared in 1946 for the first meeting after its creation — which were last updated in 1982 — or is following informal traditions. The Council will agree when I say that these rules of procedure are neither adequate nor adapted to the needs of today.

In 2005, the World Summit — in line with Article 10 of the United Nations Charter, which clearly mandates the General Assembly to make recommendations, including to the Security Council — reflected in its Outcome (General Assembly resolution 60/1) the need for far-reaching measures to achieve the goals of legitimacy, transparency and accountability. The S-5 group was formed for the sole purpose of contributing to the improvement of the working methods of the Security Council.

In 2006, we presented to the General Assembly a draft resolution with a set of recommendations (A/60/L.49). The Council reacted with presidential note S/2006/507, which was an important step in Council working methods. The S-5 also welcomed the update of note 507 in 2010 (S/2010/507). We commend Japan, Bosnia and Herzegovina and all the other members of the Council involved for their invaluable contribution to improving the working methods in recent years.

However, the implementation of the recommendations in note 507 has been inconsistent. While commending the Council for the progress achieved so far, the S-5 group continues to argue for improvement in their implementation. We therefore call for the adoption of an action plan to implement the recommendations in note 507. The Council's Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions could be mandated with this task and could regularly report to the Council and the wider membership of the United Nations on progress in its work, including in the analytical part of the Council's annual report.

The S-5 also considers that complementary measures are needed to enable the Council to enhance its authority and effectiveness and to be more responsive to the United Nations membership as a whole. There is considerable agreement among Member States that the Security Council must improve its working methods. That agreement transcends the various interest groups with regard to the enlargement of the Council and forms a large common denominator.

This is why a few months ago the S-5 group presented a new draft resolution with concrete, pragmatic and easily implementable proposals. In this resolution, we suggest measures to enhance the implementation of note 507, and we propose further measures. The draft resolution is attached to my written intervention. This text, on which we have consulted with the membership as a whole, has met

with considerable support. Let me highlight some of the proposals.

First, as chair of a country-specific configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission, I appreciate that the chairs are invited to the relevant Council debates. I support statements by France and the United Kingdom, among others, favouring stronger interaction between the Council and the Commission. I encourage the Council to take a step further and invite chairs to informal consultations as well, as my colleague the representative of Brazil proposed earlier. And more generally, peacebuilding considerations should be integrated at all levels of the Council's work.

Secondly, with its composition in 2012, the Council will have unique expertise in peacekeeping. We therefore encourage it to continue to improve the drafting of mandates and to articulate clear goals for new operations, taking into account the needs on the ground as expressed by the relevant stakeholders, including non-State actors. The Council should strengthen its cooperation with troop- and police-contributing countries. And the Council should review progress on the basis of clear criteria and, at the end of each mandate, draw the lessons learned from the experience.

Desiring to make its contribution, Switzerland commissioned from the Center on International Cooperation a study of working methods of the Council in the case of the United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic and Chad. Advance copies are available outside the Chamber. A discussion of the findings will be organized soon.

Thirdly and lastly, the designation of the chairs of subsidiary bodies by the five permanent members only, and of the elected members only, is an anachronism. Likewise, the practice of the P-5 taking the lead on nearly all country-specific resolutions is outdated. We encourage the P-5 to revisit these practices. Given the complexity of today's world, the Council should make the best use of the expertise of each of its members.

The S-5 group takes note of the position of the P-5 that improving the working methods is a matter for the Security Council only. If the Council wants to be solely responsible for its working methods, it should act accordingly by improving them soon.

The S-5 group has always taken a constructive approach and will continue to do so. We are ready to work hand in hand with the Council to improve openness and transparency. That is why we call upon the Council to take up our proposals and to relaunch the process for improvement. If there is no action, calls for reform by the wider membership will become more pressing. That would put at risk the relevance of the most important organ for ensuring peace and security in the world.

In closing, I wish to recall the commitment of the S-5 group to the cause of improving the working methods and to stress its constructive approach. The group is ready to embark on an institutionalized dialogue with the Security Council on implementing note 507 and on any other improvement in its working methods along the lines that the S-5 set out in its draft resolution. We expect the Council to react promptly, openly and constructively to our ideas. The S-5 will remain seized of this matter.

The President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to the representative of Japan.

Mr. Kodama (Japan): At the outset, allow me to express my deep gratitude to you, Mr. President, for your initiative, which includes convening today's open debate on the working methods of the Security Council — an issue on which Japan places great importance — and holding a separate and in-depth discussion in the General Assembly earlier this month on the annual report of the Security Council. We also acknowledge the work of Ambassador Barbalić, Permanent Representative of Bosnia and Herzegovina, for his contribution in his capacity as Chairperson of the Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions.

The discussion on working methods is crucial to ensuring prompt and effective action on the part of the Council for the maintenance of international peace and security and to securing the support of the wider United Nations membership in the implementation of Council decisions. Continuous attention and effort, such as the better use and implementation of presidential note 507 as revised last year (S/2010/507), are vital to achieving improvement in the working methods.

The issue of working methods is also important in the context of Security Council reform. The intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform have identified working methods as one of the five key issues for reform. Achieving real progress in

this area will require continuing and sincere efforts on the part of the Council as well as initiatives led by Member States. In this connection, we highly appreciate the dedication shown by the S-5 group.

We recognize that the Security Council has been engaged in an effort to increase transparency and has made some significant progress in that regard, as reflected in its more frequent interaction with non-Council members. It has also shown some success in improving efficiency. For example, the programme of work is briefed by the presidency to non-Council members at the beginning of each month and is readily available on the Council website. In its interaction with non-Council members, the Council has not only engaged in dialogues with relevant parties such as troop- and police-contributing countries and the Peacebuilding Commission but has also made use of informal interactive discussions. Such improvements are duly reflected in the revised note 507.

Furthermore, under Japan's initiative, a comprehensive *Handbook on the Working Methods of the Security Council*, commonly referred to as the "green book", was compiled to assist newly elected members of the Council, as well as the wider membership, in gaining an understanding of the workings of the Security Council. I am delighted to announce that the handbook is now available as a publication of the United Nations. It can now be purchased for $12 at the United Nations bookstore or online at amazon.com. Incidentally, the colour is no longer green, but white and blue.

We also listened with keen interest to your presentation, Mr. President, at the General Assembly, which described recent efforts in the Council to improve its internal efficiency, and commend members of the Council on such undertakings.

While it is important to acknowledge the progress made to date, we must continue our efforts to improve the working methods. More specifically, the improvements that we hope to see include improvement of the monthly assessments by the President on the work of the Council through summaries of major discussions. That will help the creation of a more substantive annual report.

It is also critical to acknowledge that effectiveness is not antithetical to openness. The Security Council must recognize that interaction with concerned parties is necessary in order for the Council to take prompt and effective actions. In that context, we note that progress in improvement of the Council's working methods cannot be achieved without the cooperation of the permanent members. Needless to say, a periodic review of progress is necessary, and, with help from existing and newly elected members, we hope for continued engagement on that issue in the coming years.

In conclusion, the participation of many non-Council members in today's meeting testifies to the fact that the working methods remain a critical issue. We appreciate the work of countries that have helped promote the issue from both inside and outside, such as the S-5 and Portugal. Japan will also maintain its engagement in this very important issue in order to promote continuous improvement in the working methods of the Security Council.

The President: I now give the floor to the Permanent Representative of Jordan.

Prince Zeid Ra'ad Zeid Al-Hussein (Jordan): I, too, would like to thank you, Mr. President, most warmly for having convened a meeting devoted to working methods of the Security Council, I also wish to congratulate you on your distinguished leadership in presiding over the work of the Council for this month. Placing yourself at the end of today's list of speakers is a gracious gesture that is deeply appreciated.

I wish to use my following intervention in this thematic debate not to repeat what the Permanent Representative of Switzerland has offered in the way of thoughts governing the position of the group of five small nations (S-5), which, naturally, we support fully, but to focus on the two paragraphs 18 and 19 of the S-5 draft resolution, which cover the use, or threat of use, of the veto. I will attempt to explain why we have inserted them into our draft resolution, given that they are of direct relevance to the work of the Security Council and, in particular, to the permanent members.

The Security Council derives its rights and obligations from the United Nations Charter. Its functions and powers are spelled out broadly in Article 24 of the Charter, including, inter alia, its primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security and its obligation to act in accordance with the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter in the discharge of its functions.

While Article 24, paragraph 1, appears to be clear in its ordinary meaning, over the past 65 years, our predecessors have argued — and often — over whether or not "primary" is equal in meaning to "exclusive". That discussion has not found consensus between the permanent members and the rest of the membership, and I will not dwell on it today. What was also missing in our previous discussions was a common understanding over the ordinary meaning of the word "responsibility", which has, unfortunately, been regarded by some as conferring rights, without due regard being equally paid to the implied duties flowing from that responsibility.

What I would, therefore, like to fix our attention on today is the next paragraph in Article 24 — paragraph 2. I would also like to invite members to read that important provision together with Article 1, paragraph 1, which we believe we are required to undertake for a correct reading of the Charter.

Article 24, paragraph 2, states:

> "In discharging these duties the Security Council shall act in accordance with the purposes and principles of the United Nations".

It reads "shall act". It does not read may act, or should act. It reads "shall act". In other words, there is no discretion here. What we find instead is an obligation. It is also worth noting that, like Article 24, paragraph 2, the Council's powers pursuant to Chapter VII, set out in Article 39, are similarly couched in obligatory language: shall determine and shall make recommendations, or decide.

The second part of paragraph 2 of Article 24 then explains where, in the relevant chapters of the Charter, the specific powers of the Council are laid down, and yet all of it rests — must rest, as I noted a few minutes ago — on the purposes and principles of the United Nations.

Among the purposes of the United Nations, as defined in Chapter I, Article 1, of the Charter, and of greatest relevance to the responsibility of the Security Council and our discussion today is the purpose elaborated in the first paragraph of Article 1, which reads:

> "To maintain international peace and security, and to that end: to take effective collective measures for the prevention and removal of threats to the peace, and for the suppression of acts of aggression or other breaches of the peace, and to bring about by peaceful means, and in conformity with the principles of justice and international law".

That last phrase "and in conformity with the principles of justice and international law" was inserted by Senator Arthur Vandenberg of the United States, on 2 May 1945, and accepted immediately by the "Big Four", and, subsequently, by the rest of the representatives in San Francisco, without argument and by consensus.

So, when considered together, Article 24, paragraph 2, and Article 1, paragraph 1, in very abbreviated form, read: in discharging its duties the Council shall act in accordance with the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter and, therefore — my addition — in conformity with the principles of justice and international law.

Now, we must understand two issues. The Charter confers those powers on the whole Council and does not specify what each individual member of the Council should do. That much is undeniable. If, however, the use or threat of use of a veto by a permanent member prevents the Council, by virtue of the majority required in Article 27, paragraph 3, from acting to deter, prevent or dismantle alleged serious violations of the sort that not only threaten international peace and security, but also create an obligation erga omnes on all Member States to address it, the question arises as to whether that exercise by one permanent member subverts the Council's ability to fulfil its responsibilities under Article 24 and to uphold the principles of justice and international law, in accordance with Article 1, paragraph 1.

Should we continue, therefore, to read Article 27, paragraph 3, in a manner in which it effectively eclipses the purposes of the United Nations and the responsibilities of the Security Council? Are we not entitled, or even obliged, to look towards an understanding that reconciles those provisions?

We may be able to continue as we are when dealing with lesser crimes but, when faced with the worst systematic abominations of human cruelty that often threaten international peace and security, such questions become increasingly difficult to ignore, for there is little that is common between normal criminality and the outer extremity of human misconduct.

I would ask the Council to consider, for example, the description provided by the Nuremberg Tribunal in its 1947 judgment, following the main proceedings prosecuted by Ben Ferencz in the trial of the Einsatzgruppen. The Tribunal found:

> "If what the Prosecution maintains is true, we have here participation in a crime of such unprecedented brutality and of such inconceivable savagery that the mind rebels against its own thought image and the imagination staggers in the contemplation of a human degradation beyond the power of language to adequately portray."

And this is the second point we need to understand. However we interpret the principles of justice, when there are serious allegations of crimes being committed — crimes of a gravity approximating the description found in the aforementioned judgment, and which threaten international peace and security — any member of the Council, and particularly if it is a permanent member, voting against measures otherwise agreed upon by a majority of the Security Council should at least explain how its position is consistent with the Charter — that is, with the purposes and principles of justice — and international law.

The S-5 is aware of the foundational and historic role played by the permanent members. Whatever we may say about some of the Council's performances in the past, the permanent members must be given due credit for having prevented, in a nuclear age, the recurrence of the sort of war that devastated very large portions of the Earth twice in the twentieth century. And we are not calling, as the S-5, for a Charter amendment to have the veto abolished or even restricted. The veto does have an important role. But that role should now be reconciled with Articles 24 (2) and 1 (1) — Articles that should no longer simply be overlooked. And this could best be achieved through the forging of a new understanding.

We therefore suggest to the permanent members, and we do so most respectfully, to consider refraining, voluntarily, from the use or threat of use of the veto altogether in situations where there are serious allegations of genocide, crimes against humanity and grave breaches of international humanitarian law. The S-5, in offering the content of paragraphs 18 and 19 of its draft resolution, to be presented in due course to the General Assembly pending final consultations, is basing these recommendations on the right accorded to the General Assembly under Article 10 of the United Nations Charter.

The President: I give the floor to the representative of Egypt.

Mr. Abdelaziz (Egypt): I have the pleasure to speak today on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM). At the outset, I would like to convey the Movement's appreciation to the Portuguese presidency of the Security Council — and to you personally, Ambassador Moraes Cabral — for having convened this important open debate to discuss the progress achieved in the implementation of the measures set out in the note by the President of the Security Council of 26 July 2010 (S/2010/507), and the related concept paper (S/2011/726, annex) to direct the discussions towards enhancing the transparency and efficiency of the work of the Security Council in order to meet the expectations of the general membership of the United Nations.

I would like also to seize this opportunity to congratulate Azerbaijan, Guatemala, Morocco, Pakistan and Togo — members of the Movement — on their election as non-permanent members of the Security Council for the years 2012-2013, and to thank the outgoing members Gabon, Lebanon and Nigeria for all their efforts in support of NAM principled positions.

Without prejudice to the interlinkage between Security council reform and improving its working methods, as the latter represents a component of the overall reform of the Council pursuant to General Assembly decision 62/557, the Non-Aligned Movement attaches great importance to the issue of improving the working methods of the Security Council, as reflected in its long-standing position reiterated in the relevant paragraphs of the Bali Final Document (see S/2011/407), adopted by the sixteenth NAM Ministerial Conference held in Bali, Indonesia, in May 2011.

The Non-Aligned Movement appreciates the work of the Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions, and the efforts of its Chair, Bosnia and Herzegovina. NAM stresses the importance of further enhancing its key role in improving the working methods of the Security Council, taking into due consideration the positions of the larger membership of the Organization, particularly

during the annual General Assembly debate on the report. In this regard, the Movement expects that the upcoming annual reports of the Security Council to the General Assembly shall reflect in detail the activities of the working Group and the conclusions of its deliberations, including the steps taken to promote the full implementation of presidential note S/2010/507 and any other future notes, in order to properly analyse and assess what has been achieved and what needs to be done.

NAM welcomes the steps taken by the Security Council, pursuant to note 507, in publishing its updated programme of work and the tentative forecast on the Council's website in a timely manner, and also appreciates the practice of several Presidents of the Security Council of briefing the wider membership about the monthly programme of work following its adoption by the Council at the beginning of each month, and in this regard looks forward to that practice being complemented by the holding of informal wrap-up sessions at the end of each presidency to evaluate what has been achieved.

In relation to this issue, the Movement welcomes the personal initiative of some Presidents of the Security Council in preparing a comprehensive and analytical assessment of the work of the Council under their presidency. This positive trend, when institutionalized, will definitely provide a more coherent account of how the work of the Security Council evolves each month in dealing with issues on its agenda. Therefore, those monthly assessments should include cases in which the Council has failed to act, including the reasons for the resort to veto, and the views expressed by its members during the deliberations on the agenda items under its consideration.

Furthermore, the assessments and the annual report should elaborate the circumstances under which the Council adopts different outcomes, be they resolutions, presidential statements, press statements or elements to the press. It is imperative that the General Assembly be aware not only of the decisions adopted by the Council, but also of the rationale, reasons and backgrounds of those decisions, as well as the effectiveness and impact of those decisions on the situation on the ground.

With regard to the Security Council's annual report, the Movement welcomes as a step forward the informal meetings between the July presidencies of the Council and the wider membership on the preparation of the annual report, which contribute to enhancing the quality of those reports, which still need to be more comprehensive and analytical. It would be relevant to benefit from the input of the Informal Working Group on Documentation in the preparation of the annual reports. At the same time, the Security Council should submit, pursuant to Articles 15 (1) and 24 (3) of the United Nations Charter, special reports for the consideration of the General Assembly.

The Movement notes the increase in the number of public meetings, and expects that the quantitative increase of those meetings shall be associated with a qualitative improvement through the provision of real opportunities and more meaningful exchanges of view to take into account the contributions of non-Council members, particularly those whose interests are or may be directly affected by possible decisions of the Council. Furthermore, statements or comments should not be restricted to Council members after briefings by the Secretariat or the Special Envoys and Representatives of the Secretary-General; the concerned party should be given the opportunity to express its views and position on such briefings. The general observations and positions formulated by numerous non-members of the Security Council during its debates or open debates should be properly taken into account in any possible outcome of those debates and should also be reflected in the Council's annual report.

On the other hand, the Movement stresses the importance of convening more frequent Arria Formula meetings as a practical way to ensure more interaction with non-Council members and regional and subregional organizations, and of the Council's continuing to hold informal interactive meetings, similar to the recent meeting on 21 November of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Conflict Prevention and Resolution in Africa on lessons learned in coordinating response and supporting local capacity.

The Non-Aligned Movement welcomes the continued briefings and consultations of the Council with the troop- contributing countries (TCCs) as part of the effort to plan and execute peacekeeping operations more effectively and with clearer mandates. The Working Group on Peacekeeping Operations should involve TCCs more frequently and intensively in its

deliberations through sustained, regular and timely interaction.

The Non-Aligned Movement believes that the initial and major concrete step towards improving the working methods of the Security Council should be to reach an agreement on permanent rules of procedure to replace the current provisional rules, which have been in force for more than 60 years. Moreover, the Security Council should establish its subsidiary organs in accordance with the letter and spirit of the Charter of the United Nations, and those organs should function in a manner that would provide adequate and timely information on their activities to the general membership.

The Security Council should fully take into account the recommendations of the General Assembly on matters relating to international peace and security, consistent with Article 11 (2) of the Charter, instead of continually encroaching on the functions and powers of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council by addressing issues that traditionally fall within the competence of those two organs. In that regard, it is imperative to revisit the relationship between the Security Council and the other principal organs of the Organization in order to restore the missing institutional balance in accordance with the Charter.

Furthermore, regular interaction between the Presidents of the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and the Security Council is needed in order to discuss and coordinate the agendas and programmes of work of the respective principal organs that they represent in order to establish increased coherence and complementarity among those organs in a mutually reinforcing manner.

It is indeed a positive step for the Security Council to have held three open debates since 2008 on improving its working methods in order to systematically analyse the progress achieved in that regard. The Non-Aligned Movement encourages the Security Council to continue improving that practice, not only by convening those debates, but also by taking into consideration the views and proposals expressed by the non-Council members in any outcome of such debates.

In conclusion, the Movement believes that more steps are needed, along with the necessary political will of Member States, particularly the permanent members of the Council, to improve the working methods of the Council through both the General Assembly and the Security Council. Transparency, accountability and consistency are key elements that the Security Council should observe in all its activities, approaches and procedures. Improving the Council's working methods would no doubt contribute to strengthening its ability to maintain international peace and security and to deal efficiently and effectively with its mounting workload and with the multiplicity and complexity of the issues on its agenda.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Liechtenstein.

Mr. Barriga (Liechtenstein): As a member of the group of five small nations (S-5), we align ourselves with the statement delivered earlier by the Permanent Representative of Switzerland. I will focus my comments on two specific parts of the revised draft General Assembly resolution that we circulated earlier this year.

First, the S-5 advocates a more systematic use of the mechanisms available to the Council to ensure accountability for the most serious crimes under international law. Clearly, the Council has a certain track record in this respect, ranging from the establishment of ad hoc tribunals in the 1990s to two referrals of situations to the International Criminal Court (ICC). At the same time, the engagement of the Council has been ad hoc and not driven primarily by the gravity of the situations. We believe that the effectiveness and legitimacy of the Council's important work in this area would benefit from a number of considerations.

Decision-making needs to be based on a thorough assessment. Ideally and time permitting, the Council should act on the basis of extensive information documenting the seriousness of the situation and the nature of the crimes involved, produced for example by a commission of inquiry. At the same time, swift action must of course be possible, as the example of Libya illustrates.

National proceedings should be promoted. Given the primacy of national jurisdictions, the Council should also consider asking more frequently for effective national proceedings to be put in place, supported where necessary by capacity-building measures or by an international component.

There also needs to be sustained political support. Where the Council establishes accountability mechanisms, it should be willing to take the action required to make such mechanisms effective. There has consistently been a problem with the execution of arrest warrants, and Council action in that respect has been consistently lacking. When the ICC is involved, the Council should insist on the cooperation of those States that have a legal obligation in that respect.

As to financial support, lack of financing can be a significant obstacle to the effectiveness of international criminal justice and lead to significant delays in proceedings. While financial aspects have played a significant role with respect to almost all of the accountability mechanisms used by the Council in the past, a discussion is needed in particular with respect to ICC investigations mandated by the Council.

Secondly, the S-5 suggests three measures on the use of the veto. The Permanent Representative of Jordan has just spoken very eloquently on the use of the veto in situations that involve the most serious crimes under international law. In addition, we believe that, given the Council's practice of considering that an abstention does not constitute a non-concurring vote, meaning a veto, a new practice could be established that would allow a permanent member to cast a negative vote without giving it the effect of a veto. That additional tool would enable any permanent member to take a clear position on the substance of a text, while making it clear that it does not intend to block the adoption of a proposal.

As is well known, the S-5 is pursuing its goals on different tracks, including in direct engagement with Council members. We thus highly appreciate today's opportunity. At the same time, we are continuing our efforts to advance our draft resolution in the General Assembly. We remain open to all possible tracks to improve the workings of the Council through a pragmatic and constructive approach. We note, however, that the response from the Council so far has largely been silence.

The President: There are still a number of speakers on my list for this meeting. I intend, with the concurrence of the members of the Council, to suspend the meeting until 4 p.m.

The meeting was suspended at 1:20 p.m.

United Nations S/PV.6672 (Resumption 1)

Security Council

Sixty-sixth year

Provisional

6672nd meeting

Wednesday, 30 November 2011, 4 p.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Moraes Cabral	(Portugal)
Members:	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Ms. Hodžić
	Brazil	Mr. Garcia
	China	Mr. Sun Xiaobo
	Colombia	Mr. Quintana
	France	Mrs. Le Fraper du Hellen
	Gabon	Mrs. Onanga
	Germany	Mr. Eick
	India	Mr. Kumar
	Lebanon	Mr. Karanouh
	Nigeria	Mr. Onowu
	Russian Federation	Mr. Kravchenko
	South Africa	Ms. Kota
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Ms. Sheard
	United States of America	Mr. Donegan

Agenda

Implementation of the note by the President of the Security Council (S/2010/507)

Letter dated 18 November 2011 from the Permanent Representative of Portugal to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2011/726)

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room U-506.

11-61406 (E)

Please recycle

The meeting resumed at 4.10 p.m.

The President: I wish once again to remind all speakers to limit their statements to no more than four minutes in order to enable the Council to carry out its work expeditiously.

I now give the floor to the representative of Mexico.

Mrs. Morgan (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): I should like to express particular gratitude to Portugal for having convened this open debate. Mr. President, as your delegation stated during the debate on this same issue held in April last year (see S/PV.6300), the elected members of the Security Council have historically been the ones who have pushed forward reforms in the working methods. Perhaps the reason for this is that only elected members can understand the importance of transparency, particularly when their two-year mandate expires and they themselves become dependent once again on the information provided by the new members.

I should like also to commend the efforts made by Japan during its chairmanship of the Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions during 2009 and 2010, which culminated with the update of presidential note 507 (S/2010/507) and its subsequent distribution.

We have to recognize that the Security Council has improved its working methods in recent years. Since the adoption of presidential note 507, more public meetings and open debates have been held. The content of and the consultations held prior to issuance of the Security Council's annual report have seen an improvement, and greater interaction with troop-contributing countries and police-contributing countries has been established.

Following along those lines, Mexico, during its participation in the work of the Security Council as an elected member in 2009 and 2010, resorted to innovative and inclusive meeting formats, such as Arria-formula meetings and interactive informal dialogues, with the aim of hearing the views of the Member States affected and civil society in cases that concern them directly.

Despite that progress, we have to acknowledge that the implementation of these improvements has been uneven, depending, on many occasions, on the Security Council presidency of the day.

In order to continue enhancing the transparency and efficiency of the Security Council and its interaction with the rest of the membership, we propose the Informal Working Group on Documentation consider making the following improvements to the Council's working methods.

First, during open debates the order of the speakers' list should be reversed, so that Council members would deliver their statements at the end. That would allow them to truly listen to the membership and to include its contributions in the outcomes of such meetings, particularly when a presidential statement is adopted. We regret, Sir, that your presidency was not allowed to take innovative steps in this respect during today's debate, which shows that much work remains to be done.

Second, informal consultations should be convened only when it is strictly necessary. We do not understand the relevance of holding informal consultations to hear the presentation of reports and written statements that could perfectly well be delivered openly.

Third, we should maintain the practice of inviting the Chairs of the country-specific configurations of the Peacebuilding Commission to participate in debates that involve issues that are on their agenda. This could be extended to informal consultations as well.

Fourth, there is a need to continue to strengthen cooperation between the Council and regional and subregional organizations, in accordance with Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations, in particular by inviting the relevant organizations to participate in public and private meetings of the Council.

Fifth, transparent mechanisms should be established in connection with the designation of the chairs of the Council's subsidiary organs. The opacity that currently prevails is unacceptable.

Sixth, sanctions committees should be encouraged to hear the views of Member States affected by sanctions and to include such views in their mandatory reports to the Council.

Seventh, it is necessary to promote stronger interaction between the Security Council and other

bodies, particularly the Fifth Committee, when considering decisions that have financial implications.

Eighth, there is a need to strengthen transparency and accountability in the establishment and renewal of the mandates of special political missions and in their financing.

The convening of this debate reflects the Security Council's openness to considering improvements in its working methods. We hope that the many ideas that have been discussed here today will not fall on deaf ears. The best way to avoid this would be for the incoming presidency of the Informal Working Group on Documentation to submit a report to the membership on the progress made in the implementation of the recommendations discussed today.

Finally, we invite the incoming members of the Security Council to adopt these recommendations.

The President: I give the floor to the representative of Slovenia.

Ms. Štiglic (Slovenia): I would first like to thank the Portuguese presidency for convening today's open debate and you, Sir, for your initiative to discuss the Security Council's working methods and assess the implementation of measures set out in the renewed presidential note S/2010/507 of July 2010. I would also like to recognize Bosnia and Herzegovina's chairmanship of the Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions and pay tribute to the work and contribution of Japan to the development of the Security Council's working methods, including through its leadership on the presidential note contained in document S/2006/507 and its renewed version. Slovenia also welcomes and supports the initiatives of group of five small nations in this regard.

It is timely and appropriate to have a debate in open format on this important issue. The need to further adapt the Security Council's working methods is one of the key areas of the reform of the Council, and one on which there is a broad sense of agreement. There is still room for improvement in order to enhance the transparency, inclusiveness, legitimacy and accountability of the Council so that it can fulfil its responsibilities for maintaining international peace and security in the most effective and efficient manner. In recent years, we have seen some progress towards the realization of these goals. Strengthening the Council's interaction with the wider United Nations membership is an important element in these efforts.

United Nations Members have been confronted with an increasing number of Security Council decisions with notable security, legal and financial implications for each Member State. It is also for this reason that the Council must ensure better transparency and engagement with non-member States in its decision-making processes on a more regular basis.

The holding of open briefings and debates remains of particular importance. The wider membership should have an opportunity for its views to be heard and, to the extent possible, reflected in the outcomes of such debates. Consideration could be given to the order of speakers, while at the same time allowing some time between the meeting and the adoption of the possible outcome document, thus demonstrating that the Council is willing to reflect on the views presented by the wider membership before the final decision is taken. The distribution of concept papers has proved to be a useful tool for delegations to adequately prepare for their interventions and to focus discussions.

We support enhanced dialogue of the Council with relevant actors, in particular parties directly affected, concerned or interested. We welcome the Council's approach to new meeting formats, such as Arria Formula meetings and informal interactive dialogues, and call for greater use of such meetings. Interaction with non-State actors, non-governmental organizations and civil society should be further encouraged.

We support a more systematic consultation process with troop- and police-contributing countries and the Secretariat on peacekeeping mandates. We welcome the concrete steps taken to cooperate more closely with the chairs of country-specific configurations of the Peacebuilding Commission, as well as to interact with regional and subregional organizations and make better use of Article 54 of the United Nations Charter.

We welcome the introduction of monthly horizon-scanning briefings as an important contribution to conflict prevention and early warning. We support more frequent and open briefings by the Secretariat, the Special Representatives and Special Advisers of the Secretary-General on situations on the Council's

agenda and those of emerging concern. We welcome the use of available technology that allows for more briefings from the field and real-time reaction to situations on the ground. We see Council field missions as a valuable tool in providing the right perspective on local realities.

In our view, the Security Council should emphasize the importance of the rule of law in dealing with matters on its agenda. This embraces reference to upholding and promoting international law and ensuring that the Council's own decisions are firmly rooted in that body of law, including the Charter, international human rights law, international humanitarian law and international criminal law. Special attention should be paid to the protection of civilians and those most vulnerable. We urge the permanent members to refrain from the use of the veto in the event of genocide, crimes against humanity and serious violations of international humanitarian law. We also support further consideration of ways to improve the transparency and work of the sanctions Committees.

Throughout the years, we have witnessed the widening of the diversity of the Council's agenda, its ever-increasing workload, and the growth in complexity of the issues before the Council. We believe that the way the Security Council considers improving its working methods is in large part connected to the increasing need to refine and enhance its work throughout the conflict cycle by considering prevention, including new emerging threats, peacemaking, peacekeeping and peacebuilding in a holistic manner.

Slovenia remains convinced that Security Council reform needs to address both the enlargement of the membership and improvement of its working methods. In that context, it is crucial to ensure that the Security Council continues to regularly assess how its practice matches the goals contained in presidential note 507 and that it continues to collect valuable inputs from the entire membership on ways to improve its working methods further.

The President: I give the floor to the representative of Australia.

Mr. Quinlan (Australia): I would like to thank you, Sir, for convening this debate. We hope that these debates can be institutionalized by the Council. I will abbreviate what I have to say, and am circulating a longer statement.

As we all do, Australia supports a Security Council that better reflects the contemporary world and is responsive. Reform of the Council's composition is central, but so too, of course, is improving its working methods. The working methods of an organization can be the key to its performance. We have said here before that the basic mindset of the Council should be one of active accountability and deliberate transparency. The more transparently the Council undertakes its work, the more accountable it is; the more it shares information, consults and accepts input, the more effective it will be.

There have been good developments on working methods to welcome, but as we know there remains much to do. I will mention three issues.

The first relates to conflict prevention. As the security challenges facing the globe evolve, it is vital that the Council make best use of the tools already at its disposal to prevent conflict. To do so, it needs to be able to act in an informed manner. In this context, we join others in welcoming the practice of regular briefings by the Department of Political Affairs, with a focus on horizon-scanning and early warning. These should be maintained. We also commend the Council's willingness to consider complex thematic issues relating to some of the globe's most demanding challenges. The recent debate on climate change and security signalled responsiveness to challenges that affect small island States in particular.

Of course, the Council should not stray into the prerogatives of other organs, but the Council is of course responsible for maintaining international peace and security. We now understand that challenges to this can be complex and non-traditional. Having up-to-date information and analysis on new security challenges and discussion of their implications is essential to the Council's preventive role.

In order to enhance the Council's capacity for prevention, we support the suggestion of regular briefings from the Special Adviser for the Prevention of Genocide and Mass Atrocities. We have also encouraged the Council to issue a standing invitation to the Executive Director of UN-Women and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict.

The second issue I want to raise is improving consultation with troop- and police-contributing countries. These are an important mechanism to ensure that peacekeeping mandates are informed by knowledge of ground realities, and that expectations are realistic and well understood. Such consultation is also important throughout the lifecycle of a mission and in planning transitions. Consultative meetings need to be structured and scheduled well in advance. We welcome the initiatives adopted in its presidential statement of 26 August (S/PRST/2011/17) to improve these processes. Mission-specific groups can also be an important conduit to the Council; the core group on Timor-Leste, of which we are a member, is a good example.

My third point concerns interaction between the Council and the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC). While there has been good progress, there is much more that can be done to achieve a more dynamic and organic relationship between the two. We welcome the participation of the PBC Chair and the chairs of the country-specific configurations in Council meetings and informal dialogues. We believe that the Council could do more to draw on the expertise of the PBC, particularly during the renewal of mission mandates.

We endorse much of what has already been said by others, including about more open meetings; more information on the work of sanctions committees; more engagement with regional and subregional organizations, such as the African Union; more use of Arria Formula meetings and informal dialogues; making draft resolutions and presidential statements available to non-members at an early stage; and enhancing efficiency through the better harnessing of technology.

Of course, the Council's efficiency and effectiveness also depends in part on the performance of us, the non-members. It is necessary for us to take full advantage of the opportunities open to us; we should do so actively and dynamically, but above all we should have something to say. We would welcome reforms to make these debates less formulaic and more productive. They could include a better reflection, in the outcome of meetings and the Council's annual report, of what non-Council members say. We welcome Portugal's initiative in the recent meeting on new challenges to peace and security (S/PV.6668) of allowing the briefers a chance to respond to the comments from Council members.

To conclude, we have here a very simple linear equation. Increased transparency and consultation increase effectiveness and further enhance the legitimacy of this body in the eyes of all of us Member States. That, of course, strengthens the Council's pre-eminent role in global peace and security.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Costa Rica.

Mr. Ulibarri (Costa Rica) (*spoke in Spanish*): I would like to begin by expressing our appreciation to Portugal, and to you in particular, Mr. President, for your leadership and commitment to improving the Security Council's working methods, and for having organized this debate.

Costa Rica aligns itself with the statement made by the representative of Switzerland on behalf of the group of five small nations (S-5), but we would like to suggest some additional ideas and proposals, focusing on transparency.

In a representative entity such as the United Nations, transparency should be a basic standard and a permanent practice in all its bodies, including the Security Council. We know that in order to effectively promote international peace and security, the Council needs a reasonable degree of confidentiality for some of its analytical, deliberative and decision-making processes. However, such confidentiality should be the exception, not the rule. Beyond this, it is crucial to cultivate a genuine willingness to share all information that is not confidential through transparency and disclosure processes that are systematic, timely and easily accessible to all Member States. Better transparency, apart from being a duty, would increase the perception of the Council as a representative, reinforce its legitimacy and enable it to draw on the most relevant contributions of all Members of the Organization, thereby improving its effectiveness.

Costa Rica recognizes that in the wake of the presidential note of July 2006 (S/2006/507) and its update of last year (S/2010/507), significant progress has been made in transparency. In the written version of this statement, we highlight the Council's most important advances, so I will not repeat them now. However, I should add that from the non-governmental point of view, the Security Council Report website has contributed fundamentally to well-informed, systematic and rigorous monitoring of the activities of the Council.

To sum up, we can say that the Security Council's transparency has improved. Nevertheless, the improvements are not enough; they have not been consolidated, much less duly formalized. As such, they are at risk of paralysis or reversal. For example, while the number of meetings open to all Member States has increased, these are often preceded by informal closed meetings where agreements are negotiated. The reports by the presidencies assessing the work done during the month of each presidency are extremely infrequent. The Council's annual report to the Assembly, due to its enormous length, inadequate synthesis and total lack of analysis, is rarely illuminating and is not released far enough ahead of the debate on its contents. Special reports on topics of particular relevance, as provided for in the Charter, are strikingly absent.

In light of these and other considerations, I would like to conclude with some specific suggestions. Many of these are included in the annex to the draft resolution that has been submitted for consultation by the S-5, and Costa Rica considers them particularly important. The list is included in my written statement; I will simply cite as examples the importance of regularizing the assessment reports made at the end of each presidency; scheduling more frequent and substantive consultations with interested Member States as part of the process of drafting and preparing draft resolutions and other work produced by the Council; notifying Member States in a timely manner about the development and final assessment, including budgetary aspects, of missions established by the Council; holding more frequent and more substantive open meetings of the Council; and cultivating a more open attitude towards external contributions.

Five years after the appearance of presidential note 507, the Council is at a critical juncture where its transparency and general working methods are concerned. It must either rekindle its energy and momentum in order to consolidate the gains achieved so far and move forward with those that are still pending, or remain stagnant and regress, with negative results for both its effectiveness and its legitimacy. We all know that the first is the only real option.

The President (*spoke in French*): I call on the representative of Luxembourg.

Ms. Lucas (Luxembourg) (*spoke in French*): Luxembourg warmly congratulates the Portuguese presidency of the Council on its initiative in organizing this open debate on the working methods of the Security Council, and on its commitment to progressing towards greater effectiveness, increased transparency and improved interaction with non-members of the Council. I also commend Bosnia and Herzegovina for the results achieved under its chairpersonship this year of the Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions.

Since the last open debate on this subject was held in April 2010 (see S/PV.6300), the Security Council has, commendably, continued to work on applying many of the proposals in the 2010 presidential note (S/2010/507). We encourage the Council to continue in this direction in order to, among other things, further entrench new forms of informal dialogue with non-member States of the Council and parties concerned with situations on the Council's agenda; make more regular use of Arria Formula meetings in order to strengthen interaction between the Council and civil society and non-governmental organizations, whose analyses and experience on the ground may have particular relevance for the Council's deliberations; organize a meaningful number of open Council meetings in order to assure direct transparency in the Council's deliberations for both non-member States and the international community as a whole; improve transparency in the deliberations of subsidiary bodies of the Council, particularly the sanctions committees, and encourage the chairs of those committees to take every opportunity to seek the views of non-member States that are actively interested in their areas of activity and to keep them informed about their ongoing work; and, finally, strengthen relations with regional and subregional organizations on issues of international peace and security, so as to benefit more from their special expertise.

We also welcome initiatives aimed at better preparing the Security Council to react to new threats to international peace and security, particularly the practice initiated by the United Kingdom of inviting the Department of Political Affairs to brief the Council on topics whose destabilizing potential makes them worthy of attention. Luxembourg is also following with great interest the work of the group of five small nations, which has put forward concrete proposals for making further progress in the Council's working methods. We broadly endorse those proposals.

Allow me to raise a subject particularly dear to me in my capacity as chair of the Guinea country-specific configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC): the importance of encouraging ever closer relations between the Security Council and the Commission. Guinea's case is special in the sense that Guinea is the only country on the PBC's agenda that is not also on the agenda of the Council. The PBC's support of Guinea, aimed at consolidating peace and helping democracy take root there, is nonetheless relevant to the Council's work.

Beyond the specific situations of the countries that are on the agendas of both the Council and the Commission, the latter's experience and expertise can be helpful to the Council, whether on questions of the links between peacekeeping and peacebuilding and the transition through the various post-conflict phases, on preparing for elections in fragile States, or on subjects of regional significance, such as combating transnational crime and drug trafficking in West Africa.

The Peacebuilding Commission can also offer an integrated and holistic perspective on the interdependence between security and development, a subject that the Council took up on 11 February, on Brazil's initiative (see S/PV.6479). The PBC can help the Security Council not to lose sight of the absolute necessity of bettering socio-economic conditions in post-conflict countries in order to make sustainable peace viable.

Luxembourg, a founding Member of the United Nations, has never been a member of the Security Council. We are therefore particularly attentive to the interaction between member and non-member States of the Council, and between the Council and the other main organs of the United Nations, especially the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council. But the continuing improvement of the Council's effectiveness is of interest to all of us who have subscribed to the Charter, which stipulates in Article 24 that the Council acts in the name of all Member States to ensure the rapid and effective response of the Organization to preserve international peace and security. Our credibility and that of our Organization depend on it.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Finland.

Mr. Viinanen (Finland): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Nordic countries Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden. I will deliver an abbreviated version of the statement circulated in the Chamber.

There has been considerable improvement in the Council's working methods in recent years. We underscore the need for regular informative briefings to non-members of the Council. Interactive wrap-up sessions at the end of each presidency would enhance information-sharing and openness. The Brazilian presidency held such a meeting, for which we thank it. We encourage other Council members to consider organizing such briefings in the future.

The annual Finnish workshop aims at giving new members of the Council an in-depth orientation to the practice, procedures and working methods of the Council, in order to help new members to hit the ground running. The workshops also serve the wider membership, as their reports are distributed as official documents of the Council.

The Security Council report is another initiative that has greatly contributed to information sharing and increased openness about the work of the Council.

Efficiency in the Council's work is very important. Conflicts today are more complex and the Council's agenda is increasingly stretched. There is scope for improving the quality of open debates by ensuring that outcome documents reflect input from all participating countries. Concept papers could direct the focus of debates to questions on which the Council would like to consult the larger membership.

Lately the Council has increasingly been using video links to receive briefings from the ground. This is a welcome development and we encourage the Council to continue developing the practice further.

The Council should improve its cooperation with other United Nations bodies. In addition, troop- and police-contributing countries should be more closely engaged at all stages of decision-making for peacekeeping operations.

The Council should continue to actively seek ways to improve its ability to prevent conflict and to solve long-term conflicts on its agenda. Good cooperation with the Peacebuilding Commission and other partner organizations, such as regional and subregional organizations, the Bretton Woods institutions and others, is instrumental in that endeavour.

The Council has made good progress in developing cross-cutting issues, such as women and peace and security. The Council should now systematically link country-specific situations and horizontal themes, and follow up on requests for thematic information when handling reports on country-specific situations.

The Nordic countries welcome the significant progress achieved in enhancing due process for the listing and de-listing procedures of the Committee pursuant to resolutions 1267 (1999) and 1989 (2011) concerning Al-Qaida and associated individuals and entities. We welcome the renewal of the mandate of the Ombudsperson. We recommend that fair and clear procedures be extended to all sanctions regimes.

We call on the Council to continue on a positive reform path and to hold annual open debates on this issue. In this context, we would like to emphasize the importance of presidential note S/2010/507, and we urge the Council to fully implement the innovations contained therein.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Morocco.

Mr. Loulichki (Morocco) (*spoke in French*): First of all, Mr. President, I would like to thank you for having organized this debate on the Security Council's working methods, with which you bring to a close a rich and intense month of November for the Council under the presidency of Portugal.

No one can deny the gradual improvement in the Council's interaction with non-member States and other international and regional actors or the wealth of information available about the Council's work. They are unprecedented. That progress can be attributed to the Council's will to infuse its work with more openness, transparency and interaction; to the growing legitimate interest of non-member States to be involved in and informed about the Council's work and decisions, which it undertakes on behalf of the entire international community; and to advances in new information and communication technology, which have made the dissemination of information faster and easier, fostering greater access.

Year by year, the Council has come to consider new situations and to address multiple challenges that directly affect international peace and security. The Council has begun to face challenges that are different in scope, size and nature from traditional inter-State conflicts, notably international terrorism, civil conflicts, weapons of mass destruction and transnational organized crime. The potential impact of those challenges on the international community as a whole has led to an ever-increasing interest on the part of non-member States in the Council's work.

Responding to that growing interest, the Council has undertaken commendable efforts to improve its efficiency and transparency and to interact more effectively with other parts of the United Nations system. The Council's adoption, at the initiative of Japan, of presidential note S/2010/507 and the panoply of measures it recommends bear witness to the Council's resolve in this matter. Those efforts deserve to be pursued and expanded. In this regard, my delegation would like to offer the following thoughts.

First, the Council's increasing use of open and interactive debates is an overall positive development. At the same time, the Council must retain the discretion to decide on the format of meetings, based on the sensitivity of the matter under consideration and an objective assessment of the impact of a given format on the Council's ability to consider the issue.

Second, the practice of the Council presidency to hold informative briefings for non-members on the monthly programme of work gives non-members an opportunity to interact directly with the presidency of the Council. The practice should be maintained and expanded.

Third, consultations with troop- and police-contributing countries are important not only because they respond to a pressing need but also because they promote efficiency. We must take advantage of those countries' experience and expertise at the various stages of designing and implementing mandates for peacekeeping operations.

Fourth, given that the maintenance of peace is the primary function of the Council, it is important to make as much use as possible of the Working Group on Peacekeeping Operations and to encourage it to bolster its collaboration with troop-contributing countries and the Secretariat.

Fifth, the Council's interaction with regional and subregional organizations is an added value for the maintenance of international peace and security. The

Council has made significant progress in furthering such interaction in recent years.

Sixth, while we welcome the increased number of open thematic debates, we believe that they should be narrowly focused and that the views of non-member States should be taken into consideration.

Seventh, the Council has involved the Peacebuilding Commission and its country configurations in its debates on an increasingly regular basis. It is important to strengthen that practice because peacebuilding is not only built into peacekeeping mandates, but it is also an element of conflict prevention that helps to prevent relapse into violence.

Eighth, no effort must be spared in the development of preventive diplomacy. My delegation is pleased to note that this theme has gained relevancy in recent times, both within and outside of the Council. During our term in the Council, my delegation will make every effort, together with the other members, to strengthen the Council's conflict prevention activities, especially in Africa.

Ninth, the Council's annual report to the General Assembly has notably improved and is now more substantive and analytical. We encourage its continued improvement and welcome the practice launched four years ago whereby the presidency of the Council requests the viewpoints of United Nations Member States well before consolidating the report.

My tenth and penultimate point is that the monthly assessments made available to all Member States by the Council presidency are a valuable source of information on the work of the Council. The practice of presenting those reports at the end of each presidency should be reinforced to preserve their relevance and timeliness.

My final point relates to the Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions, which plays a crucial role in improving the Council's working methods. It should strengthen its interaction with non-members of the Council and work towards evaluating the implementation of note S/2010/507 and possible additions thereto, bearing in mind the views of all United Nations Member States.

In the ongoing endeavour to improve the working methods of the Council, my delegation considers it necessary to integrate both the requirements for prompt and effective action to maintain international peace and security, and the support of the international community for measures taken. That is a difficult task, to be undertaken with pragmatism, open-mindedness and awareness that the Council acts on behalf of the entire international community.

I began by thanking the Portuguese presidency. I wish to conclude on a more personal note and to congratulate you personally, Sir, for the tact, effectiveness and the ease with which you have conducted the deliberations of the Council this month. You have set a good example for a new member preparing to return to the Council next year.

The President (*spoke in French*): I thank the representative of Morocco for his very kind words, which have likely been exaggerated by friendship.

I now give the floor to the representative of Spain.

Mr. Oyarzun (Spain) (*spoke in Spanish*): Before we begin to consider the implementation of presidential note S/2010/507 on the working methods of the Security Council, I believe that a triple manifestation of gratitude is both necessary and just. First of all, my delegation thanks Portugal for having taken the initiative to convene this open debate on the working methods of the Security Council and for the excellent concept note (S/2011/726) it has distributed. We welcome the opportunity to speak on a subject of such importance to us all. We also thank Belgium and Japan for having convened similar open debates during their respective presidencies of the Council.

We are fully aware of the difficulties and understand that organizing open debates on this subject is not an easy task and that a certain resistance must be overcome. But it is worthwhile. The working methods of the Security Council may not always be the hottest issue on the current international agenda, but there is no denying that it remains relevant for all of us in our daily work at the United Nations.

Secondly, we wish to thank the Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions, and especially the four countries that have chaired it since 2006: Japan, on three separate occasions; Slovakia; Panama; and Bosnia and Herzegovina. Their excellent work led to the milestone presidential note S/2006/507 and its 2010 update. We are further indebted to Japan for updating the

handbook on the working methods of the Security Council in December 2010.

Thirdly, we would like to recognize the important role played in this matter by the group of five small nations — Costa Rica, Jordan, Liechtenstein, Singapore and Switzerland (S-5) — first by submitting a draft resolution in March 2006 containing a list of concrete measures for the Council's consideration, and most recently by submitting in March a second draft resolution with additional measures, which was revised in June. The S-5's continued contribution to this matter has been outstanding.

The members of the Security Council have committed themselves to implementing the measures contained in note 507. Some are already being implemented; these include those related to the Council's monthly programme of work, such as the publication of the preliminary forecast, the briefings by the incoming presidency and the ongoing updates to the programme of work.

Other measures could be implemented more effectively and in a more consistent manner; these include the measures contained in paragraph 28 of the note on open debates; paragraph 44 on draft resolutions, presidential statements and press statements; paragraph 59 on informal interactive dialogues; and paragraph 65 on the famous Arria Formula.

We agree with the fives-5 that note 507 must be continuously updated and enhanced through additional measures. Its most recent draft resolution on working methods, which was submitted to us all in its letter of 25 March, contained a list of measures that the Council could use as a guide. I would like to express Spain's support for some of these measures, in particular the following three: briefings by the outgoing presidency on the implementation of its programme of work; the establishment of a working group on lessons learned that would be responsible for analyzing suggested mechanisms aimed at enhancing implementation of the Council's decisions and proposing mechanisms for improving it; and the inclusion of a specific section in the annual report of the Council to the General Assembly on the implementation of its working methods.

We should like to propose an additional measure that was not included in the list drafted by the S-5. We consider it important to provide updated information on the composition of the groups responsible for preparing the initial drafts of resolutions. We encourage the distribution of those initial drafts, to the extent possible, before they are passed on to informal consultations of the whole. I know that is an ambitious proposal, but if it were put into even partial practice it would certainly enhance the transparency of the Council's work.

It is a fact that note 507 contains no specific measures regarding the veto. Such measures appear, however, in the S-5 list. My delegation is in favour of including those measures in future updates of the note. It should not be a problem for the permanent members of the Council to commit to implementing those measures, which are supported by the overwhelming majority of Member States. For example, the following two measures are aimed at limiting the use of the veto: an explanation should be provided for the reasons for resort to the veto, equivalent to an explanation of vote; and resort to the veto should be avoided in cases of genocide, ethnic cleansing, war crimes and crimes against humanity. It would not be an obligation to produce a result, but it would be, at the least, an obligation of conduct.

In conclusion, we believe that we should maintain our current approach to improving the Council's working methods. We are in favour of the regular convening of open debates, perhaps every two years, as proposed by the representative of Australia, and of updating presidential note 507 periodically, perhaps every four years. It is our hope that the members of the Council, permanent and non-permanent alike, will commit to considering and eventually to implementing new practical measures as a result of today's open debate.

Moreover, Spain believes that it is the collective duty of all Member States to contribute to improving the working methods of the Security Council in order to make it more transparent, inclusive, efficient and effective. I would like to conclude by reiterating the thanks offered by the Ambassador of Morocco to you, Sir, for the excellent work of your presidency this month.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of the Sudan.

Mr. Hassan (Sudan) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, my delegation endorses the statement delivered

by the Permanent Representative of Egypt on behalf of the States members of the Non-Aligned Movement.

I congratulate you once again, Sir, on your presidency of the Security Council for this month, and commend you for having organized this important debate to review developments in the implementation of the measures set out in the note by the President of the Security Council contained in document S/2010/507 of July 2010. Those measures were proposed to boost the effectiveness and efficiency of the Council's working methods and to achieve more transparency, which is the aspiration of all United Nations Member States, in accordance with the Charter principles related to the mandates and prerogatives of the Council in maintaining international peace and security. I take this opportunity to once again congratulate Azerbaijan, Guatemala, Morocco, Pakistan and Togo on becoming new non-permanent members of the Council for the next two years. We wish them great success in their work and in the Council's deliberations.

In our view, reforming the working methods of the Council is a major component of comprehensive reform. Security Council reform would ensure equitable geographical representation for all continents, especially Africa, which is home to 54 countries. It is worth recalling that some 67 per cent of the items on the Council's agenda involve Africa.

Given that today's meeting is focused specifically on procedural questions that are necessary to enhance the Council's capacities, we wish to highlight some elements of the final document of the sixteenth Ministerial Conference of the Non-Aligned Movement, held in Bali in May (see s/2011/407, annex I). In particular, that document refers to improving the Council's working methods and to implementing the measures set out in presidential note 507, in particular the publication of the daily programme of Council deliberations in the *Journal of the United Nations* and making it available to all. In addition, the monthly programme of work should be circulated at the beginning of every month for consideration by all Member States. In that regard, we welcome the efforts of some Member States, when presiding over the Council, to ensure that all Member States are informed about the programme of work by keeping them abreast of items on the Council's monthly agenda in a transparent and objective manner.

In regard to the briefings and information offered by Secretariat representatives and subsidiary bodies of the Security Council, we call for the texts of those briefings to be distributed among all countries. Copies of the slides or other visual material that are sometimes used during the briefings should also be distributed.

Council documents, especially reports of the Secretary-General on peacekeeping operations, should be circulated in advance, before the Council considers them, in all official languages of the United Nations. Very often, a version of the report is distributed to Council members only, but is not circulated as an official document to all Member States until the day of the meeting and occasionally even thereafter.

In regard to meeting formats, we are mindful that the number of public meetings and open debates is growing every day. However, we all agree that most Council meetings involve consultations behind closed doors, in which only Council members, some Secretariat representatives and other staff members participate. Nevertheless, in the interests of objectivity and transparency, the country concerned should be allowed to participate in those consultations. We reiterate the importance of enhancing consultations and cooperation between the Council and regional and subregional organizations, with which we must organize consultative meetings. This is consistent with the provisions of paragraph 170 (a) of the Outcome Document of the 2005 World Summit (resolution 60/1) on the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals, in which the relevant regional organizations are invited to participate in both open and closed Security Council meetings, whenever needed.

We recall the three rights of all Member States under the Charter and the Security Council's provisional rules of procedure, specifically rules 37 and 39 regarding the participation of all Members in public meetings. We welcome the efforts of the Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions, but we still hope that its activities, conclusions and recommendations on reforming the working methods of the Council will be included in the annual report of the Council to the General Assembiy so that all Member States might participate and contribute to those recommendations and conclusions.

In conclusion, we are very mindful of the importance of coordination and complementarity

among the various organs of the United Nations when required, such as coordination between the Presidents of the Security Council, the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council. Under no circumstances, however, should we undermine the exclusive mandate and prerogatives of those organs with respect to the objective consideration of agenda items and the measures taken in that regard.

The President: I give the floor to the representative of Malaysia.

Mr. Haniff (Malaysia): I thank you, Mr. President, for convening this debate and for your concept note (S/2011/726, annex), both of which are valuable in their own right and demonstrate Portugal's continued commitment to greater openness and transparency in the work of the Security Council under your presidency. My delegation wishes to associate itself with the statement made by the representative of the Egypt on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

Malaysia firmly believes that the reform of the Security Council is important to ensuring that the Council reflects today's global realities and becomes a more effective and competent body in addressing various challenges and threats to international peace and security. In that regard, we are of the view that the principles of transparency, more frequent interaction with non-members, consistency and efficiency should be applied to the entire spectrum of the Security Council's work, including in the implementation of its resolutions.

My delegation notes with much appreciation the ongoing implementation of several measures contained in document S/2010/507 to enhance the efficiency and transparency of the Council's work. We hope to participate in more interactions like today's meeting, which we believe will provide the necessary impetus for their implementation.

Allow me to first share my delegation's views on transparency of the work of the Security Council, in particular on sanctions. Malaysia welcomes the further improvement of the procedures and working methods of the Security Council with regard to the sanctions framework. However, while we maintain the highest respect for the primacy of Council resolutions, the rules of natural justice dictate that resolutions issued under Chapter VII powers should be mindful of the inherent right of individuals and entities to notice, to be heard and to be represented. As such, while assistance should always be rendered to third-party States that have been inadvertently affected by the imposition of sanctions, the rights of individuals affected thereby should also be safeguarded, in accordance with principles of international law.

In that regard, Malaysia wishes to express its deep concern about the process of listing entities and individuals pursuant to various Security Council resolutions. Our deep concern stems from the refusal thus far on the part of certain sanctions committees, and by extension the Security Council, to share pertinent information on sanctions actions affecting Malaysia.

My delegation also notes that some progress has been made in the transparency of some of the procedures of certain sanctions regimes with the incorporation of mechanisms that automatically de list petitioners unless an express decision to retain them is taken by the respective sanctions committee. Nevertheless, we advocate that more should be done to inject more transparency and fairness into the listing and de-listing processes in order to ensure that both processes are in compliance with the basic tenets of natural justice and the rule of law.

In the rejection of requests for de-listing of individuals, it is incumbent upon the respective committees to inform the Member States or individuals concerned of the reason why a de-listing request has been rejected. It is not enough for the committee to merely "make every effort" to provide reasons for objecting to a de-listing request, especially in view of the fact that significantly greater effort has been exerted to establish the sanctions regimes and, further, to place individuals and entities under them.

It would be detrimental to the Security Council's interests if requests for de-listing were rejected under the guise of security, when the true motives for rejection are political. The sanctions committees are, after all, political bodies, as opposed to independent and impartial judicial bodies. If, however, the sanctions committees decide that transparency in decision-making is not possible for security reasons, then I fear that the process will very much be subject to abuse by members of the Security Council.

I would also like to briefly touch upon the issue of encouraging greater interaction between the Security Council and non-members and other United Nations bodies. My delegation believes that the briefings given

to the Council by the Special Representatives, heads of United Nations missions, Chairpersons of the Peacebuilding Commission and the country-specific configurations and of the Secretariat are inherently useful, because they provide an account of what is actually happening on the ground. As such, we would encourage greater transparency in briefings made to the Council and for non-members of the Council to be allowed to attend briefings without the right to speak or interact. That would not only generate greater interest in many issues among the entire membership, but would also afford non-members of the Council the chance to understand subjects and the viewpoints of the Council and minimize the political speculation that can lead to misunderstanding on the part of non-members of the Council.

Finally, Mr. President, I would like to commend you for an exemplary stewardship of the Council for the month of November, which in itself demonstrates reform of the Council's working methods. We have observed, Sir, your briefings to members of the press, your constant communications on the work of the Council with non-members, and your deference to the work of the General Assembly.

My delegation also appreciates the opportunity to participate in two open debates this month. This month, we have seen an increase in the transparency and interaction of the Council, and we hope that this trend will continue in the months and years to come.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Singapore.

Mr. Chua (Singapore): I thank Portugal for convening this important debate, and I thank you personally, Sir, for your leadership. Singapore fully subscribes to the statement delivered by the Permanent Representative of Switzerland, who spoke on behalf of the group of five small nations (S-5).

The call for improved working methods of the Security Council and the reasons for that call have worn a deep groove in the Council and the General Assembly. Unless improvements are made, there is a real risk that the Security Council and the United Nations as a whole will end up sounding like a broken record to the rest of the world. To remain relevant, the Council needs to ensure, through reform of its working methods, that it is accountable, transparent, inclusive and effective.

However, this refrain has fallen on deaf ears. Progress in working methods reform remains uneven and slow. Some may argue that the Council should not be marching to the tune of the General Assembly, as the Council is master of its own procedures. However, the effective functioning of the Council directly impacts not just relations between the General Assembly and the Council, but also each and every Member State with a stake in international peace and security. If the Council is to act for the benefit of the wider membership, it should be willing to engage members in open and honest dialogue and create a virtuous cycle of feedback and effective decision-making.

In that spirit, we in the S-5 have set out in our draft resolution specific suggestions on how the authority and effectiveness of the Council could be improved. I will mention one proposal that is closely tied to inclusiveness.

The growing complexity of today's global challenges means that the Council must consider many factors and actors, if it were to address any problem comprehensively. When considering peacekeeping mandates, for instance, there is a need to systematically factor in peacebuilding considerations. The Council could regularly invite Chairs of the country-specific configurations of the Peacebuilding Commission to participate in relevant discussions. It would also be good if the Council sought out Member States' views on their ability to implement Council decisions.

Some will point to the increasing number of open debates in the Council as evidence of the Council's reformed working methods. But open debates in themselves do not necessarily enhance the Council's accountability, transparency, inclusiveness or effectiveness. Given that outcomes are often predetermined, it is difficult to see how open debates can give Member States insight into the Council's deliberations or enable the Council to benefit from Member States' views on its work.

To be honest, the so-called open debates seem to substitute for genuine dialogue between the Council and the wider membership. Such suboptimal communication between the Council and the General Assembly cannot continue. If we are unintelligible even to ourselves, we will not be able to send the strong and coherent messages that the world is in dire need of today.

It is clear that there are still many working methods issues to be addressed. We need a sustained and genuine dialogue between the Council and the wider membership on working methods that can help us reflect on where we are, review what has yet to be done, and figure out what more we should do. The S-5 stands ready to engage constructively with the Council on that important endeavour.

The world is undergoing a profound transition and transformation. We are at an inflection point. The Security Council needs to adapt to changing geostrategic circumstances. The ultimate solution that we all look towards is, of course, broad-based Council reform, but working methods need to be improved now. Otherwise, the Council and the United Nations both risk becoming a broken record. In this wired and networked age, the Council and the United Nations should be working on a digital platform, not an analog turntable.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Mr. Khazaee (Islamic Republic of Iran): Mr. President, I wish to express to you my gratitude for convening this important meeting and for the concept paper distributed earlier to facilitate the implementation of the note contained in document S/2010/507 on the working methods of the Security Council. While associating my delegation with the statement delivered by the representative of Egypt, who spoke on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement, let me share and emphasize the following points as well.

The Islamic Republic of Iran attaches great importance to reforming the working methods of the Security Council with a view to strengthening the Council's role in promoting the purposes and principles of the United Nations, particularly the maintenance of international peace and security and the peaceful settlement of disputes, as well as developing friendly relations among nations and upholding the rule of law in the international relations among States by taking into account the interests of the general membership of the United Nations.

One of the major concerns we have is the excessive reliance on the unlawful use of force or the threat of such use by powerful members of the Security Council in order to advance their interests through outdated practices, thereby continuing to endanger international peace and security and undermine the fundamental principles of the United Nations and international law. The discussion of the reform of the Security Council and its working methods would well provide a platform for Member States to review and to renew their commitments to the lofty principles of the Charter and the main organs of the United Nations that are supposed to promote peaceful international relations among States.

As is correctly noted in the concept paper, contained in the annex to document S/2011/726, the lack of improvement in the three interlinked and key areas of transparency, interaction with non-members and efficiency in the working methods of the Security Council continues to be the principle theme suggested for discussion with the aim of identifying ways of improving all those aspects. I wish to build on those shortcomings through further elaboration and a few practical suggestions, as follows.

First, according to Article 24 of the United Nations Charter, the Security Council should act on behalf of all Member States, but, in reality, Council decisions not only reflect the wishes and the views of the general membership less and less, but, in many cases, do not even represent the genuine opinion of its own membership.

Secondly, despite the requirements set forth in the Council's own decisions on its working methods, including those contained in document S/2010/507, which, for instance, call for consultation by the Council with the broader United Nations membership, in particular interested Member States, including countries directly involved or specifically affected, when drafting, inter alia, resolutions, presidential statements and press statements, in many cases, however, the general membership, even the countries concerned, are kept totally uninformed of the negotiations on resolutions or statements directly affecting them, nor are their views even sought on the Council's outcome documents. That is also the case for non-permanent members, which are frequently faced with secretive negotiations among a few permanent members on important issues.

Thirdly, the quick and unnecessary resort to Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter and the threat or use of sanctions in cases where no action is even necessary are other disturbing facts that have

undermined the credibility and legitimacy of the Council's decisions.

Fourthly, the Security Council sanctions regime needs to be reviewed. Sanctions should be imposed only in strict conformity with the purposes and principles of the Charter and should avoid exceeding the Council's authority or acting in breach of the principles of international law.

In order to increase the transparency of its work, achieve a balanced approach in its interaction with non-members and improve the efficiency of its working methods, the Council should seriously address those shortcomings and take into consideration the relevant provisions of the Charter, as well as the resolutions that clarify its relationship with the General Assembly and other organs of the United Nations. In fact, the Security Council's increasing encroachment on the prerogatives of other main organs of the United Nations, particularly the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council and their subsidiary bodies, as well as such technical bodies as the International Atomic Energy Agency, is also of particular concern to Member States.

The Security Council's failure to adequately improve its working methods and decision-making processes has brought about a situation in which we witness a decline in international public opinion's trust in that important organ. Undoubtedly, impartiality, transparency and fairness are the key premises on which the Security Council should base its approach in discharging its Charter-mandated responsibilities. Every effort should be made to render the Council more democratic, representative and accountable. My delegation stands ready to contribute to the achievement of those goals.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Belgium.

Mr. Grauls (Belgium): I have the honour to address the Council on behalf of the Netherlands and Belgium. First of all, I would like to thank Portugal, as President of the Security Council, for having convened this debate. It reminds me of a debate that I had the honour to preside over in August 2008, which was dedicated to the same theme (see S/PV.5968). We would also like to express our gratitude to Bosnia and Herzegovina and to Japan for steering this agenda in 2011 and before.

In recent years, real and encouraging improvements have been made in the working methods of the Security Council. Your concept note (S/2011/726, annex), Mr. President, makes that very clear, and rightly so. The debates on working methods have already produced results. It is good to remind ourselves that the Council today operates under new, better and more transparent working methods than before. So there has been movement, there is movement and, hopefully, there will continue to be movement, be it incremental and sometimes discreet, but definitely movement. The Netherlands and Belgium would like to commend both the permanent members and the successive elected members of the Council on their efforts in that regard.

The Netherlands and Belgium want to stress that fact, because we do not want the further development of better working methods to become hostage to a lack of progress in the wider debate on Security Council reform. In other words, we do not want the working methods debate to come to a halt because there is no movement or progress on the other chapters of the Security Council reform agenda currently being debated in the General Assembly.

In your concept note, Sir, you invite the wider membership to come up with practical suggestions aimed at enhancing transparency, efficiency and Council interaction with United Nations members at large that could make a difference in the day-to-day Security Council business. The Netherlands and Belgium would like to submit some very concrete ideas, it being understood that none of those ideas, if implemented, would encroach on the decision-making power of the Security Council. The Netherlands and Belgium wish to fully respect the powers of the Security Council and its members, permanent and elected, as set out in the Charter.

First, let us encourage the monthly presidencies of the Council to take whatever action needed, within their powers, in order to enhance the transparency, the outreach towards the wider United Nations membership and the efficiency of the Council. In recent times, inventive and creative presidencies have taken welcome steps in that direction, which deserve to become more common practice. There are now more, public briefings, more public debates, more Arria Formula meetings and more informal interactive dialogues. That is much appreciated by the wider membership. That modern approach to working

methods enhances not only interaction with Member States, but also the potential to increase the Council's outreach towards regional organizations, civil society and interested individuals.

Secondly, the Netherlands and Belgium see room for further improvements when it comes to country-specific debates. It is the task of the Security Council to discuss challenges in specific countries. However, sometimes, the country concerned is not included in those discussions, when their [presence really matters.

A way to enhance the transparency and the inclusiveness of the Security Council's work would be to invite countries regarding which issues are being debated but that are not members of the Security Council to contribute to Council debates of particular importance and under a formula to be decided on an ad hoc basis. By doing so, the Security Council would give a fair and decent chance to countries to put their point of view forward. After hearing such a country, the Security Council can still discuss the issues at stake in a restricted debate among its own members without the country concerned having to be present. The same goes for the Chairs of Peacebuilding configurations, who could similarly contribute in an even more effective way to the deliberations of the Council with regard to the country on the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) agenda.

A similar reflection can be made with regard to the need for increased interaction between the Security Council, troop- and police-contributing countries and the Secretariat. That type of interaction would be particularly welcome prior to the deployment and after the return of technical assessment missions.

Thirdly, the notion of peace and security today encompasses a far broader scope than it did 65 years ago. In recent years, Security Council debates have focused on climate change, international crime, terrorism, piracy, diseases, natural resources and other so-called "new" issues that affect international peace and security. We would like to encourage the Council to consult even more broadly than it has done so far.

Fourthly, the Netherlands and Belgium strongly believe that there is potential for more inclusive and more transparent working methods in the subsidiary organs. Those organs prepare Council decisions and can thus only benefit from external advice at their level.

Let me give one example. The Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict, currently under German chairmanship, has granted access to the Chairs of PBC configurations, because issues such as child soldiers and gender-based violence against children are, all too often, common practice in countries on the agenda of the PBC. That practice of granting access to a subsidiary organ should be generalized and should be adopted as a general rule by all subsidiary organs, as appropriate.

The Netherlands and Belgium have taken on an active role in the debate on wider Security Council reform. I believe that our statement of last Monday during the first exchange of views during the eighth round of intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform clearly underlined our common strong commitment to Security Council reform in all its aspects.

Improving the Security Council's working methods is clearly one aspect of the ongoing negotiations in the intergovernmental negotiations in the General Assembly, just as it is an issue under consideration by this Council.

(*spoke in French*)

Finally, as others have done before me, I would like to congratulate the President on the way he has chaired this Council throughout November. He has handled this very heavy task with a great deal of authority and elegance.

The President: I thank the Ambassador for his kind words. I now give the floor to the representative of New Zealand.

Mr. McLay (New Zealand): I join the Belgian Ambassador in paying compliments to the President of the Council for the past month and particularly for promoting this open debate today.

New Zealand has long maintained that, in addition to changes to the composition of the Security Council, there is an equally pressing need for wide-ranging reform of its working methods. As the Belgian Ambassador emphasized, one reform should not be hostage to the other. This stems from our belief that, just as the Council derives its authority from the Charter, it must be accountable to all the 193 Member States that adhere to that Charter. The values and principles it must uphold are our values and our principles; the global peace and security it upholds is

our peace and security; and its successes and indeed its failures in fulfilling its mandate profoundly affect us all.

For the overwhelming majority of Member States that are not members of this Council — the faces pressed against the window — its working methods affect our ability to understand and contribute to its work. In turn, they directly affect the effectiveness and legitimacy of the Council itself. All States have a stake in ensuring that those working methods are transparent, inclusive and effective, and when they are discussed, we all have a right to have our voices heard and listened to.

New Zealand therefore welcomes today's debate, the fourth on this topic since 1994. Since then, significant improvements have been made to Council working methods, most notably through presidential notes S/2006/507 and S/2010/507. We commend those welcome changes. Today's discussions provide an opportunity to review progress and to highlight areas where further improvements can be made. In the interests of time, I will focus on just four.

First, we acknowledge the significance of the measures in note S/2010/507, but we still need more consistent and meaningful implementation of those measures. Such implementation would go a long way towards enhancing the transparency, inclusiveness and quality of Council deliberations. Achieving that, however, requires that we challenge the Council's traditional culture and achieve a major shift in longstanding mindsets.

Achieving that means that, whenever possible, Council meetings, regardless of format, must be open, and that there must be a clear and compelling reason — preferably one that is publicly stated — when that is not the case. It means making participation in such meetings more meaningful and providing genuine scope for non-members to contribute to Council deliberations throughout the decision-making process. It also means achieving more timely, consistent and meaningful interaction with those non-members that have a legitimate stake in its deliberations, particularly troop- and police-contributing countries and countries that are actually on the Council agenda. One way of achieving that would be to make greater use of innovative Council meeting formats, such as informal interactive dialogues.

It also means sharing draft documents with non-Council members sooner and more frequently and giving affected parties greater opportunities for input in the preparation of those documents. It means stimulating more substantive and interactive discussions between Council members themselves. And above all, it means making transparency and inclusiveness a reflex action. Transparency and inclusiveness should be the norm for the Council's work, not the exception.

The cultural shift required for the more consistent and meaningful implementation of the recommendations in note S/2010/507 will take time, but it would help significantly if there were a more systematic process for monitoring progress in that implementation. As a first step, the Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Matters should consider developing a concrete action plan that establishes clear goals and benchmarks for implementation. Such a plan could form the basis of regular progress reports, perhaps as part of the Council's annual report to the General Assembly. Ideally, those reports would be informed by, and would in turn feed into, future open debates in the Council itself.

Secondly, we need to review current Council conventions that inhibit the optimal and equitable distribution of tasks and responsibilities. For example, the conventions under which the permanent five (P5) alone determine the Chairs of subsidiary bodies, under which chairing roles are allocated to elected members only, and under which the P5 always lead on country-specific resolutions all lack any obvious justification and should be discontinued.

Thirdly, we must ensure that the Council more effectively draws on the expertise of, and coordinates its activities with, relevant external actors. We urge the Council to build on recent positive steps to increase meaningful interaction with the Peacebuilding Commission, particularly with the Chairs of country-specific configurations and with regional and subregional organizations. Consideration should also be given to expanding that interaction to other relevant actors. Such interactions need not impinge on the Council's powers and prerogatives. Indeed, properly handled, they have the potential to augment the quality and legitimacy of its deliberations.

Fourthly, we need to reconsider the existing practice regarding use of the veto. New Zealand's views on the veto are well known, and they have been consistent since we and others forced a vote on its inclusion in the Charter in 1945. The veto is a truly awesome power. Greater transparency regarding the circumstances in which its holders would contemplate its use and in explaining its actual use would help reassure other States that its holders are wielding that power responsibly.

Agreement on an informal code guiding the use of the veto would be a welcome initiative. It was described by the Deputy Permanent Representative of Spain as obligations of conduct, and we agree.

Those entrusted with the privilege and responsibility of serving on the Security Council, whether as permanent or non-permanent members, can effectively discharge their duties only with the support and cooperation of all other Member States — those same States that elect non-permanent members and whose adherence to the Charter underpins the Council's authority and its legitimacy. We non-members — the "P-178" — have much to contribute to the Council's work, and we have every right to expect transparency, meaningful opportunities for participation and, above all, effective decision-making from the Council.

New Zealand acknowledges the genuine improvements made in the Council's working methods since the first open debate, in 1994, and, again, we compliment those responsible. It is in all of our interests that we now move to complete that work by seeing today's discussions translated into more meaningful action and into more consistent practice.

After all, this is not just a Council for its five permanent members. It is not just a Council, pro tem, for its non-permanent members. It is our Council, too.

The President: I shall now make a statement in my national capacity.

As I believe members know, I decided to speak last in this open debate in order to be able to bring into my statement suggestions and comments that were made here today.

I think that the wide participation in this debate is evidence that the issue of the Security Council's working methods is indeed a matter of interest for us all. While it is up to the Council to adopt its own rules of procedure, questions regarding its efficiency, transparency and interaction with the general membership concern all Member States.

That is why debates such as this one, open to the wider membership, are of crucial importance. They help the Council to assess regularly how its practices match those aims, while presenting us with an excellent opportunity to collect invaluable inputs from the wider membership on ways to improve it further.

Enhancing transparency, efficiency and interaction with non-members of the Council is our collective goal. This is a substantive concern, not a formal one. The question is how to make the Council more operational and effective, with a better use of its time and resources and with the full engagement and participation of all its members, and how to strengthen its global influence as a principal body which acts on behalf of all States Members of the United Nations by bringing it closer to them. The question is, ultimately, how to underline the Council's authority through enhanced accountability, through a better understanding of its decisions, and through a more open, participatory and efficient decision-making process.

In recent years, much has been done by the Council on the issue of working methods, as has been repeatedly stated today, including through its Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions. Note 507 (S/2010/507) reflects an important set of substantive improvements in Security Council practice. Portugal commends the efforts of Council delegations leading to the adoption of that important document last year. In particular, we would like to underline the leadership of Japan in this meticulous enterprise.

Now it is important to ensure that those collective efforts were not made in vain. We must intensify our commitment to monitoring the implementation of the new agreed practices on methods of work and assess their impact on the intended goals of enhanced transparency, efficiency and interaction with the United Nations membership.

There is always room for improvement, and we welcome in this regard the input of all Member States. Allow me also to recognize the leading role of the group of five small nations in their tireless efforts to present us, in recent years, with useful thoughts and

proposals aimed at improving the Security Council's working methods.

On the issue of transparency, the Council, in our assessment, during the past year continued the trend of holding more public meetings. Briefings were regularly made in public, giving the opportunity also to non-members of the Council to benefit from useful information on various situations on the Council's agenda. While consultations are useful in order to better prepare Council decisions, some effort still has to be made, in our view, not to resort so often to consultations, instead leaving consultations for when they are really needed, as informal and reserved closed settings — which they are indeed — to help build consensus and speed up decision-making.

Monthly briefings by the Presidents, including wrap-up meetings, should be encouraged. This point was also made by the representatives of Guatemala, Egypt, Costa Rica and Spain, referring to the recent example set by Brazil. We intend to follow this practice and hold, as announced in the Journal, an informal meeting tomorrow at 4.30 p.m. with the wider membership, as a wrap-up of the Portuguese presidency. These are useful practices to enhance both transparency and interaction with the wider membership, and it is a positive development that these are becoming regular practices.

A more active role on the part of Council Presidents should, however, be encouraged, so as to enhance the visibility of the Council, including in their regular contacts with the press. The contribution of the presidencies in preparing more informative monthly assessments should also be nurtured. Assessments are useful instruments that will increase awareness of the work of the Council once they are circulated among the wider membership. They should provide useful insights from the perspective of the presidencies, not mere factual descriptions. More thought should be put into improving the analytical aspect of the assessments, as they are the source of the introduction to the Security Council's annual report. This point was also made by many delegations here today, including Switzerland, Egypt, Japan and Morocco.

On the issue of efficiency, some improvements were made in consultations, where a considerable part of the Council's work takes place, as reflected in the Council's annual report: shortening the scripts and the use of videoconferences are some of the positive measures taken in this regard. Greater conviviality, interaction and informality in such an informal setting only add to efficiency, and some efforts has been made this year by Council members in that regard.

Nevertheless, some work also has to be done as regards the unbalanced workload in the monthly agenda. Many months are overloaded, with several overlapping reporting deadlines and mandates requiring extension at the same time — a situation that requires some rethinking of how the Council can better deal with recurrent matters without that exercise absorbing most of its time, leaving little space on its agenda for it to react to emerging crises and, most of all, to exercise its role in the area of conflict prevention.

Some thought is being devoted to this issue in the Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions, as was noted by the representative of Bosnia and Herzegovina at the start of this debate. I take this opportunity to thank Ambassador Ivan Barbalić for his leading role as Chair of the Informal Working Group.

Overall, with respect to the day-to-day internal work of the Council, more effort should be put into improving the exchange of information among all members, promoting wider participation and initiative in its internal decision-making process. In our view, this would enhance not only the Council's efficiency but also its legitimacy as a principal organ of the United Nations; this matter was raised by a number of delegations here, including that of India.

Further efforts also have to be made as concerns public meetings from the perspective of their efficiency. Statements by delegations are usually too long. Open debates in particular take too much time. Further efforts must be made to focus our interventions, both Council and non- Council, and abide by the time suggested. Concept papers on questions to be addressed are useful tools in this regard.

Turning to interaction with non-members of the Council, in informal consultations the Council continued to avail itself of the possibility of holding interactive dialogues, which continued to prove very useful in that different actors were heard in an informal setting, with the aim of helping the Council in its decision-making process. This trend should be encouraged. Arria-formula meetings also continued to

be organized. These new formats may be very beneficial to the Council's work, promoting interaction at an informal level, enhancing dialogue and improving information exchange. In our view, they could be used more frequently. Tour d'horizon meetings with the Department of Political Affairs are now being held regularly and have proved to be useful instruments from the perspective of conflict prevention, and I must thank the British presidency for having introduced them. Meetings with Special Representatives of the Secretary General have also proved beneficial to the Council's work, as highlighted by some delegations here today.

Debates, in particular open debates, could facilitate greater interactivity. When the Council decides to hold an open debate, the goal is to listen to the wider membership and, if appropriate, reflect the relevant inputs in the ensuing outcomes, when there are any — not speaking first, deciding on the outcome and then listening to the wider membership. I think that there is undoubtedly room for improvement here, as well as in terms of increased interactivity, greater focus and shorter statements — giving real meaning to the very concept of Council open debates. This point was, as will be recalled, underlined here by some delegations, including those of Mexico, Slovenia and Morocco.

What more can we do? Surely, we can continue to intensify the implementation of note 507 in all its aspects. The Secretariat has a central role to play in supporting presidencies and in reminding delegations to use different tools agreed in that note.

I also would like to highlight some useful suggestions put forward here today. On the annual report, more analytical information, as well as information on Council working methods, could be requested. In our view, we could take more benefit from the presentation of the annual report to the General Assembly, and in this sense we welcome the decision of the President of the Assembly to devote the debate at this session entirely to the Council's annual report. But we think that these presentations could improve as well, by focusing on specific aspects of the Council work that were more salient during the precedent year. Once again, more leeway could be granted to the presidencies in drafting their introduction to the report.

More work has to be done to establish a closer Council relation with other bodies, such as the Peacebuilding Commission, especially in the informal work with the chairs of the country-specific configurations and the President of the Economic and Social Council. We agree with those delegations — Brazil, Luxembourg and Switzerland — that referred to the usefulness of such interaction. The need for further reflection on the role of the Military Staff Committee was also encouraged.

Some important suggestions were also made as to the need for more transparency in the work of the subsidiary bodies, the selection and independence of the panels of experts, and the need for more inclusiveness in the process leading to the election of the chairs of the subsidiary bodies. We need also to give further reflection to the implementation of presidential note S/2006/507 concerning the work of subsidiary bodies, which was the outcome of several years of work in the former Working Group on Sanctions. Relevant statements, including those of Jordan, Liechtenstein, New Zealand and Spain, touched upon the use of the veto, making substantive contributions to this debate.

I wish to make one final remark to highlight the importance of this debate. The number and complexity of situations that the Council has to follow require an increasingly demanding managing capacity of its programme of work. However, in today's world, with new threats and challenges to peace and security emerging, the Council has to look ahead be able to anticipate crisis and devote enough time to conflict prevention. And, to that end, it needs to work continuously on its working methods to increase its efficiency and to be able to fully exercise its responsibilities.

I personally found this debate extremely useful, and I thank all delegations for their interest in this matter and their relevant contributions, which encourage us to pursue our efforts to always improve the working methods of the Security Council.

I now resume my functions as President of the Security Council.

There are no further speakers inscribed on my list. Before adjourning the meeting, however, and as this is, I hope, my last meeting as President of the Council, I wish to make two very brief but heartfelt remarks.

The first is to Movses Abelian and the Security Council secretariat for the extremely professional, knowledgeable, kind and even affectionate way in which they supported us this month. They are indeed not only the sixth permanent member of the Security Council, but truly indispensable. We are very grateful for all the support Mr. Abelian and his team have given us.

My second remark is one of deep appreciation for our interpreters. They are extremely professional people who permanently show enormous dedication and great patience in dealing with our idiosyncrasies. I thank them all very much indeed.

The meeting rose at 5.50 p.m.

United Nations S/PV.6673

Security Council

Sixty-sixth year

Provisional

6673rd meeting

Friday, 2 December 2011, 3 p.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Churkin	(Russian Federation)
Members:	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Mr. Barbalić
	Brazil	Mr. Garcia
	China	Mr. Yang Tao
	Colombia	Mr. Alzate
	France	Mr. Araud
	Gabon	Mrs. Bongo
	Germany	Mr. Berger
	India	Mr. Kumar
	Lebanon	Mr. Salam
	Nigeria	Mr. Amieyeofori
	Portugal	Mr. Cabral
	South Africa	Mr. Crowley
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Parham
	United States of America	Mrs. DiCarlo

Agenda

The situation in Libya

Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (S/2011/727)

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room U-506.

The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

Expression of thanks to the outgoing President

The President (*spoke in Russian*): As this is the first meeting of the Council for the month of December 2011, I should like to take this opportunity to pay tribute, on behalf of the Council, to His Excellency Mr. José Moraes Cabral, Permanent Representative of Portugal, for his service as President of the Security Council for the month of November 2011. I am sure I speak for all members of the Council in expressing deep appreciation to Ambassador Moraes Cabral and his delegation for the great diplomatic skill with which they conducted the Council's business last month.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Libya

Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (S/2011/727)

The President (*spoke in Russian*): Under rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representative of Libya to participate in this meeting.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

Members of the Council have before them document S/2011/752, which contains the text of a draft resolution submitted by France, Germany, Portugal, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2011/727, which contains the report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Support Mission in Libya.

It is my understanding that the Council is ready to proceed to the vote on the draft resolution before it. I shall put the draft resolution to the vote now.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, China, Colombia, France, Gabon, Germany, India, Lebanon, Nigeria, Portugal, Russian Federation, South Africa, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and United States of America

The President (*spoke in Russian*): There were 15 votes in favour. The draft resolution has been adopted unanimously as resolution 2022 (2011).

The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 3.15 p.m.